TRANSFORMING HOW WE UNDERSTAND "COMMUNITY" IN AN EFFORT TO REVITALIZE PLEASANT GREEN BAPTIST CHURCH

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ABSTRACT

TRANSFORMING HOW WE UNDERSTAND "COMMUNITY"
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by
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United Theological Seminary, 2025

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The ministry context is Pleasant Green Baptist Church, located in Portsmouth, Ohio. The problem is that the church needs freshness to drive growth through a demographic shift. If the leaders are taught revitalization through transformational change, then the leaders will be equipped to identify the changing demographic of the church congregation and surrounding community. The eight-week project utilized pre- and post-project surveys, the Multi-Factor Leadership questionnaire, group discussions, and journaling exercises. Because leaders are trained to identify the changing demographic, the leaders are more likely to have the necessary tools to teach others revitalization through transformational change.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge the vibrant faith communities that have played such a crucial role in my spiritual journey. A heartfelt thank you to Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church #1, Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church, Cornerstone Institutional Baptist Church, Emmanuel Fellowship Baptist Church, and Pleasant Green Baptist Church.

I also recognize the inspiring professors and mentors from Jackson State Community College, Lambuth University, Harding School of Theology, and United Theological Seminary. Your generosity in sharing knowledge and wisdom has significantly enriched my path. Moreover, the practical experience I gained at Jackson-Madison County General Hospital, Methodist LeBonheur Hospital, Veteran Medical Hospital of Memphis, East Arkansas Regional Unit, GV Sonny Montgomery VA Medical Center, Baylor University Medical Center, Daystar Christian Television Network, InCare Ohio Hospice, MarketPlace Chaplaincy, and Eastern Union Missionary Baptist Association have been instrumental in shaping my skills and perspectives.

Thank you, Lord, for allowing me to reside in the wonderful cities of Portsmouth, Ohio; Dallas, Texas; Memphis, Tennessee; Jackson, Tennessee; and Jackson, Mississippi, and for your warm embrace and community spirit. A special shout-out to the dedicated librarians, research assistants, print shops, and study participants who provided incredible support throughout this journey. Lastly, I acknowledge the power and love of God in my life.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Pleasant Green Baptist Church and Portsmouth, Ohio. You have faced many challenges and changes throughout the years. Over the past four years, we have grown together and learned from one another. Through the ups and downs, I want you to know that I deeply care for each of you. Thank you for your support on this doctoral journey and for helping me grow as a pastor.

I am truly thrilled to dedicate my doctoral research to my incredible wife, Veronica, and my energetic grandchildren—Terran, Bryson, Cameryn, and Amarra. This gratitude extends to my beloved mother, Stella; my encouraging sister, Yolanda; and my remarkable twin brother, Anthony. Your support means the world to me. I also appreciate the prayers and encouragement from my father-in-love, Henry, and my mother-in-love, Elnora. I give special honor to my father, William; my brother, Kenrick; and my son, Tedarius, while they are no longer with us are a guiding light on my journey.

A huge thank you goes to my pastors, mentors, professional associates, and peers; your unwavering support has been invaluable. I am sincerely grateful to my entire family, whose love has made this achievement possible. This work is a heartfelt celebration of all of you, and I am excited you shared this journey with me. Most of all, I dedicate this work to the Lord, who gifted and empowered me to help transform a community, a country, and a cosmos for the sake of His kingdom.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACAME	Allen Chapel AME Church, Portsmouth, Ohio
BMBC#1	Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church #1, Medon, Tennessee
BUMC	Baylor University Medical Center, Dallas, Texas
CIBC	Cornerstone Institutional Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee
DCTN	Daystar Christian Television Network, Bedford, Texas
EARU	East Arkansas Regional Unit, Brickeys, Arkansas
EFBC	Emmanuel Fellowship Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas
EUMBA	Eastern Union Missionary Baptist Association, Columbus, Ohio
GVSMVA	G.V. Sonny Montgomery VA Medical Center, Jackson, Mississippi
HST	Harding School of Theology, Memphis, Tennessee
JMCGH	Jackson Madison County General Hospital, Jackson, Tennessee
JSCC	Jackson State Community College, Jackson, Tennessee
LU	Lambuth University, Jackson, Tennessee
MLH	Methodist LeBonheur Medical Center, Memphis, Tennessee
NRSV-UE	New Revised Standard Updated Edition
PGBC	Pleasant Green Baptist Church, Portsmouth, Ohio
PRBC	Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee
UTS	United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio
VAM	VA Medical Center, Memphis, Tennessee

Church revitalization is a noble calling and a humbling endeavor. This endeavor requires both dependency upon God and a skill set that is capable of the task.

—Russell N. Small, *Church Revitalization*

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Theme and Hypothesis

Pleasant Green Baptist Church faces a significant challenge as its leadership attempts to create a diverse and youthful congregation that differs from its current church demographic. My hypothesis solves the problem of training deficiency to identify a changing demographic. If the leaders are not trained effectively to identify changing demographics, then they will continue to lose their ministry relevance and efficacy. In response, my project helps to rejuvenate its leadership.

The process entailed a comprehensive teaching plan that explored four foundations for revitalization through transformational change. By implementing this approach, the leaders can better serve their congregation and contribute to the community. The revitalization approach permeates from biblical teachings, historical events, theological principles, and interdisciplinary research, which suggests that the light in one's life requires rekindling. It is possible that darkness can become light again.

As an experienced minister, I have encountered situations where the Lord placed me in a location that lacked vitality, and he gave me the assignment to bring light to a dead and/or dry ministerial context. In each setting, intentional movement from dullness to revitalization is only possible through transformational change. Thus, assuming this divine call of Senior Pastor of PGBC and living in Portsmouth, Ohio, was not a coincidence. Instead, it was by divine providence. Plus, the movement to bring energy

and rekindling in each ministry opportunity since my time at BMBC#1 has been different.

The demographic shift caused the leaders to lose their relevance and efficacy, but if the church leaders are equipped, they can revitalize their ministry approach. The people of Portsmouth need a renewed and revitalized church. By understanding what revitalization means within the context of their community and calling, the PGBC leaders and members can attain new heights and instill a rekindled passion for ministry.

This project helped participants understand better how to serve the Portsmouth community and revitalize themselves, the church, and the community through their efforts. By the end of the eight weeks, the participants understood what transformational leadership and revitalization genuinely entailed for themselves and the people around them. The project created a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all participants, irrespective of their background or age. The following section explores the project overview in order to test the hypothesis.

Project Overview

Over eight enriching weeks, the participants and I embarked on an exciting journey that included pre- and post-project surveys, the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire, engaging group discussions, and reflective journaling exercises. The carefully selected participants from PGBC are ones who have made remarkable contributions to both our church and/or the wider Portsmouth community. From September 9, 2024, to October 28, 2024; we gathered every Monday evening from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM.

It was exciting to have so many individuals who have profoundly impacted our church and community. Each session was a vibrant tapestry of biblical, historical, theological, and interdisciplinary views, which created a dynamic learning environment. The first session started with an inspiring seminar that set a hopeful tone for the eight-week journey together. To begin this session, participants completed a pre-test questionnaire, which sparked lively discussion and invited everyone to reflect deeply on their ministries.

In the second week, the powerful message of Ezekiel 37:1-14 highlights God's desire to revitalize His people. The third week proved particularly transformative, as the historic Azusa Street Revival demonstrated that renewal is possible. Participants shared their thoughts and reflected through thoughtful journal entries inspired by the theme. As the project progressed, week four revealed the crucial roles of ecclesiology and pneumatology, illuminating the church's identity and the Holy Spirit's transformative influence. In week five, participants experienced how transformative leadership can drive revitalization. The Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire prompted participants to reflect on their leadership traits and assess whether they possess transformational leadership qualities.

During the sixth week, participants explored transformation through the perspectives of evangelism, education, mentorship, and fellowship. The takeaway from this week included insightful conversations. By week seven, we reviewed our journal entries to share ideas for impactful activities to bring back to our community. The journey concluded in the eighth week with three engaging ministry activities and a post-

test questionnaire to celebrate our collective progress and growth throughout this incredible experience.

Pre-Test and Post Questionnaires

The pre- and post-test questionnaires revealed a significant opportunity for the church to adapt to its community's shifting demographics. The participants grasped the fundamental principles of church revitalization and expressed their commitment to fostering a vibrant and engaged congregation. Based on these results, the church and the participants should engage in further learning experiences, which will enhance their understanding of the church's unique identity and equip them with innovative and effective ways to share their faith with others. By embracing this journey of growth and connection together, we strengthen the church's mission and outreach in meaningful ways.

Discussion Questions

During the engaging discussions, many participants expressed their eagerness to deepen their involvement in ministry. This dialogue provided an exciting opportunity to create initiatives that invite everyone to participate. They recognized the importance of each individual taking the initiative to engage, rather than waiting for an invitation. Together, we embraced the community's needs and uncovered meaningful connections to biblical teachings. The participants explored their collective identity as the church and allowed the Holy Spirit to inspire them. By harnessing their unique leadership qualities,

they can promote evangelism, nurture fellowship, enhance education, and support mentorship.

Journal Articles

The participants' journaling expressed their reflections on ministry at PGBC. While they faced some challenges connecting with diverse individuals, they uncovered the importance of the Word and the Holy Spirit in their journey. Interestingly, they realized that their own experiences, filled with difficulties, can truly resonate with others. This journey also sparks exciting opportunities for creative thinking and growth. It is an inspiring reminder that through our struggles, we can build bridges and foster meaningful connections with our community.

Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire

The Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire revealed that the participants possess moderate transformational leadership skills. Their standout trait was individualized consideration, demonstrating their commitment to understanding and supporting each person's needs for the benefit of the team. However, there is room for growth in intellectual stimulation. In other words, these results indicate the need for more training in revitalization.

Summary of Upcoming Chapters

Chapter one, Ministry Focus, captures my call to ministry in the context of PGBC. This chapter connects my calling with the context of PGBC in order to emphasize the

possibility of revitalization through transformative change. In chapter two, Biblical Foundation, the profound teaching from Ezekiel 37:1-14 illustrates the deeply rooted biblical principles that guide this project.

Chapter three, Historical Foundation, tells the inspiring story of the Azusa Street Revival and features the project's significant historical connections. Chapter four examines the two essential theological principles of ecclesiology and pneumatology to validate the project's sound theological footing.

The next chapter, Interdisciplinary Foundation, identifies transformational leadership as the dynamic interdisciplinary foundation for the project. Transformational leadership benefits everyone and everything. The closing chapter details the project and presents evidence for the hypothesis. In other words, it brings the entire vision to life.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Throughout history, God connects people's callings with their contexts on spiritual, relational, psychological, and sociological levels. This connection is known as synergy. The synergy between calling and context adds mutual value and benefits. As scripture confirms, these benefits may take time to materialize. For instance, the people initially did not accept Paul or Moses. In other words, synergy grapples with why God calls someone to a particular context. What one discovers is that the source of one's struggle is also the source of where one does ministry. God leads one there to support the context and grow personally in that area. It is by divine providence that God has placed me in this specific ministry context.

This chapter illustrates the synergy between my ministry calling and context. Three objectives facilitate this goal. First, this analysis identifies the correlation between my ministry interests and skills and the needs of the context. The needs of PGBC align favorably with my ministry skills. One example discussed is that PGBC seeks to engage youth. I am younger than the congregational context and closer in age to the city's demographics. In simple terms, I may have a better understanding of the needs and desires of this younger population. I may connect with them more effectively than PGBC. Consequently, I can help design a ministry plan that is relevant to Portsmouth, Ohio.

After a relationship between context and call is shown, the second objective defines the basis for the Doctor of Ministry project. Revitalization through transformational change is the subject that marks the relationship. This subject focuses on revitalizing PGBC's ministry leaders and congregation. Portsmouth, Ohio is a community that has shifted demographically, sociologically, spiritually, and relationally. To address this shift, PGBC must embrace new ministry models. Embracing the shift causes people to get out of their comfort zones. This engagement requires an outward refocus and inward mindset change. As one observes in this experience, it is challenging when a church struggles with shifts and always looks toward the past for success. Regardless of the difficulty, we must face these challenges. If we do, PGBC exists for future generations. If we do not, the church perishes as a community of believers.

Finally, this chapter offers the general nature and the project's content. It ended with a concise problem statement and an identifiable hypothesis with the methodology to determine the validity of this hypothesis. PGBC has stood the test of time, but now the church is stuck and declining after years of sustainability. PGBC has struggled to embrace the new norm, which has caused a lack of freshness. The ministry leadership and the entire congregation must be the catalyst to move the church forward. While I expected this project to be a success, this research only began the process of transforming PGBC. Revitalized ministry leadership leads to a strengthened congregation. Plus, an invigorated congregation helps lead to a refreshed Portsmouth, Ohio. Therefore, this research begins with leadership and continues with the congregation.

Context

To do ministry, leaders must understand the context's life cycle. Like any creation from God, churches go through a life cycle that determines whether there is progression, stagnation, or regression. While the church takes on organizational features, God's community is an organism, not an organization. Brosius suggests that when the leadership does not understand the current stage in the church life cycle, ministry leadership responds inappropriately to renewal.[1]

When I became the pastor of PGBC, I saw a vibrant church rich with potential and history. After thoughtful reflection, engaging conversations, and insightful divine revelation, PGBC is at a transformative stage in its journey. It all began in 1864 when Butler Harper and a dedicated group of believers from ACAME came together to establish this cherished church. From 1864 to 1940, the church experienced remarkable growth due to the hard work and vision of its members. This period was characterized by innovative ideas and ministries that flourished to meet the community's growing needs. In the following phase, from 1940 to 1980, PGBC focused on maintaining stability during challenging times, after the Great Depression. While traditions were upheld, there is now an excellent opportunity to explore ministry innovations and embrace the exciting possibilities ahead.

While the church has encountered some challenges, a vast potential for growth and revitalization lies ahead. There is a strong connection between PGBC and Portsmouth, Ohio that we can leverage to energize the mission. Despite a decline in membership since the 1980s and some members feeling weary after losing long-standing

[1] Kevin Brosius, "There is Hope: Church Revitalization," *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 25, no. 2 (Fall 2021): 130-135.

friends, there remains an excellent opportunity for renewal.[2] The church can draw from past successes while embracing new ideas that engage the younger generation and invite fresh perspectives. Change can be intimidating, but it can also lead to exciting new beginnings. PGBC must streamline its efforts and create a more inclusive environment that ignites enthusiasm for the future. For PGBC, this means celebrating the journey, welcoming innovation, and inspiring one another, which will cultivate a thriving church community that reflects the joyful spirit within the church.

This contextual analysis reveals five needs for PGBC. Each need has influenced the project's topic. To begin, PGBC must address the congregation's lack of youth and young adults. Over twenty percent of the population of Portsmouth is under the age of eighteen years old. Plus, the median age in Portsmouth is 37.1, while the male's median age is 34.7 and the women's median age is 37.9, respectively.[3] Young people bring energy and excitement. Without youth and young adults, there is no church for today and the future. New life must enter for PGBC to sustain herself. Without it, the church dies. PGBC needs to do more to demonstrate the importance of youth. Saying that PGBC needs youth and implementing a plan to reach youth are two different things. Throughout the year, there are only two activities that focus on youth. Trunk-N-Treat occurs annually in October, while PGBC's Children Community Brunch happens once a month. There are

[2] A significant factor in this decline was the loss of significant employment opportunities, which compelled numerous residents and members to migrate to metropolitan areas, such as Cincinnati, Columbus, Cleveland, and Dayton. The steel industry, which has been integral to Portsmouth's economic foundation since 1831, employed over 4,000 individuals at its height. However, this industry commenced its decline in 1972 with the gradual reduction of operations at Portsmouth Steel. By 1980, the factory had ceased all production activities, resulting in the displacement of approximately 1,200 workers. "New Boston Coke," Abandoned, https://abandonedonline.net/location/new-boston-coke/.

[3] Census Authors, "Portsmouth, OH: 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject," U.S. Census, https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?tid=ACSST5Y2020.S0101&g=1600000US3964304.

no other organized youth or young adult ministry activities tailored to meet the needs of this large demographic. The other activities are for the older portion of the church's population. PGBC must implement ministry activities which energize this population.

The second concern is developing a strategy to address the problem of market saturation and cannibalization. Market saturation occurs when a particular service has achieved its given potential.[4] What does this mean? There are six African American churches within the Northend portion of Portsmouth, which is less than a five-mile radius. However, due to the declining percentage of African Americans in the Northend community, having six African American churches in this area of the city is becoming impossible, leading to low membership or market cannibalization of older churches.

In this context, market cannibalization refers to a situation where one church experiences a decline in membership while the other church increases. Consequently, there is no net gain in the body of Christ. People shift from one church to another, often referred to as "church hopping." In Portsmouth, Ohio, older churches tend to have fewer members compared to newer ones. Since PGBC is among the oldest churches, sustaining its influence in the community requires keeping its ministry relevant and exploring new avenues for outreach. Simply attracting members from other churches does not constitute the type of growth that the Lord discusses in Matthew 28:16-20 and Acts 1:8. A revitalized leadership team must consider rebranding PGBC, distinguishing it from other churches.

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[4] Marshall Hargrave, "What Is Market Saturation?," Investopedia, https://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/marketsaturation.asp# :~:text=Market%20 saturation%20arises%20when%20the,or%20increasing%20overall%20consumer%20demand.

The third opportunity is learning how to operate in the new normal caused by COVID-19. Churches went virtual with Zoom, Facebook Live, and other interactive formats to protect the community at large from the pandemic. PGBC needs help to see the importance of having an online social media presence. They desire in-person interaction, but the older population continues to be impacted by health issues. According to Park and Boodie, African American churches faced difficulties during the pandemic because of the high infection rate.[5] New energy must be placed in the church's programming and worship service/ministry activities. Social media presents an innovative ministry context than this older population is not accustomed to. Again, the solution here begins with galvanized leadership. A revived leadership must be taught how to utilize technology. Is it the new models, the learning curve that comes with the new ministry model, and technology that scares the older congregants?

Being an instrument of blessing is the next challenge among the hopeless within the city. Portsmouth has one of the highest opioid rates in Ohio.[6] Community outreach activities must bring life and freshness. PGBC must be the place where people see the Lord's life-giving elements. The Lord came into the world that we might have life and have it abundantly (Jn. 10:10). With revitalized leadership, becoming this instrument of blessing can be accomplished. Ministry moves from just having activities to genuinely making an impact. Ministry leadership must be the torch bearer and the image of life that the Lord gives.

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[5] Stephanie C. Boodie and Jerry Z. Park, "Racializing the Religious during the Covid-19 Pandemic," *Religions* 12, no. 5 (2021): 341, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12050341.

[6] According to Harm Reduction Ohio, Scioto County, the country in which the city of Portsmouth is located, ranked #1 in overdose rate in 2018, 2019, and 2020. Dennis Cauchon, "Scioto County has Highest Overdose Rate in Ohio in 2019, Preliminary Data Show," Harm Reduction Ohio, https://www.harmreductionohio.org/preliminary-2019-ohio-overdose-death-rates-ranked-by-county/.

The lack of deepening faith has created the fifth area of focus for the ministry context. Counseling does not take the place of our connection to God through Jesus Christ. Consequently, PGBC must think creatively to help deepen the current generation's faith. The old Dr. Watt hymns may not reach a city that has struggled with hopelessness. They need something that meets them where they are. Programs cannot change one's faith but strengthening people's faith brings life to a suffering generation. PGBC must be the orchestrator of deepening faith through teaching, preaching, mentorship, and being a Christian example.

To meet the five needs listed above, PGBC must bring freshness. As proven through its 157+ years of existence, PGBC must continuously rethink and reconsider how ministry is done. This reconsideration and rethinking begin with leadership beyond the pastor. The entire leadership team and structure must be rejuvenated to influence revival among the congregation and the Portsmouth community. None of these focus areas were resolved when I completed this project. However, renewed leadership ensures that substantial efforts to help solve these concerns will occur.

Ministry Journey

My ministry journey started with accepting Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior in March of 1992. It continued with my involvement in usher and youth and young adult ministries. I completed three degrees in that process: an Associate of Science, a Bachelor of Business Administration, and a Master of Divinity. Also, I received ten units of Clinical Pastoral Education. On July 3, 2004, God called me to preach and teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I announced that call on December 5, 2004, and preached my first

sermon on February 5, 2005. From 2005- 2007, I served as an associate minister at BMBC#1. In 2006, I began my Master of Divinity program at HST. January of 2007 marked a transition as I moved my membership to PRBC. I stayed a faithful member, preacher, and resident seminarian of PRBC until 2014.

In 2013, God assigned me to the EARU as a prison chaplain. For over two years, I served there and eventually became a Certified Correctional Chaplain for my efforts. At the end of 2014, I joined CIBC and became immediately engaged in ministry. One year later, I accepted the assignment as a first-year chaplain resident at GVSMVA. I remained a member of CIBC until 2016, when God moved me to Dallas, Texas, to complete a second-year chaplain residency at BUMC. In the middle of this second residency, God led me to EFBC to become a member and minister of Christian education. By the end of the residency, the Lord told me that I would enter into congregational pastoral ministry. Two years later, in 2019, the divine guided me to DCTN to be a prayer partner. On March 30, 2021, our God fulfilled His promise when He officially called me to be the senior pastor of PGBC.

Upon review of my educational and professional development, there are identifiable skills and interests that I bring to ministry. The first one is my interpersonal skills. One skill is my ability to persevere despite challenging times. During my personal and ministerial progression, I experienced a fire, a tornado, a car accident, homelessness, successes, mistakes, speech impediment, and failures. However, I have been determined to be everything God has called me to be. I own all those things because they make me who I am today. Those experiences taught me to value what is important: people. I have a fresh lens into the brokenness of people because I am one of them. My experience of

brokenness connects to the context of Portsmouth because the community is filled with broken people. To reiterate, Portsmouth has one of the highest opioid rates in Ohio. The context needs people who resonate with brokenness. In that regard, I do ministry that brings life to brokenness.

My sense of accountability and responsibility is another interpersonal skill. I hold myself accountable for my actions, mistakes, and failures. The Bible says that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). God has placed people around me who desire the best for me and me for them. In other words, I have accountability partners. In a community that struggles with addiction and hopelessness, accountability is essential. People need to receive encouragement. However, at the same time, we sometimes contribute to our brokenness and need to be called on it. Due to the opioid epidemic, Portsmouth has numerous rehab and counseling centers, where part of the process is for people to be accountable for their actions. This dynamic presents the balance between grace and justice.

The ability to work together as a team is a unique skill that I also possess. It is an interpersonal, spiritual, sacred, and secular endeavor. Organizations can only be successful if they have teamwork. What I continue to develop and learn is that teams only work when everyone knows their role. My first teamwork experience came from playing sports and being a Cub Scout. In both experiences, we accomplished a lot. Teamwork brings people together toward the same goal. Since Portsmouth is a small city, it is easy to attempt to do things alone, but ministry is only effective through collaboration.

The third interpersonal skill is my openness to new ideas. New ideas bring freshness to ministry work. What has worked sometimes may continue to work in the

future. Therefore, I am always searching for new ways to make an impact on lives. For example, one innovative idea was to help PGBC get listed on the historic registry. The Lord created the world to be creative. As we bring it to Portsmouth, there is a need for individuals with innovative ideas and approaches. Innovative ideas and approaches stem from education. Education fosters learning opportunities, which in turn promote creative solutions. Although Shawnee State University is in the city, most of the population holds less than a bachelor's degree, leading to minimal academic discussion and conversation outside its campus. Where will new ideas—or at least discussions about the latest ideas—emerge from? As one of the newest and youngest pastors in the city, I introduce new ideas to PGBC, fostering an environment of creativity through my willingness to think outside the box.

Alongside my interpersonal competence, I also offer my information technology skills. Since my last two years of high school, when I participated in Adventures in Supercomputing, I have embraced my techie side and hold an academic degree that supports my proficiency. I have developed websites, engaged in social media initiatives, contributed to the construction and management of networks, and installed both hardware and software for various clients. Technological skills have become essential to the ministry since the pandemic began. Churches need to establish technological networks, utilize hardware and software, and much more. With technology, social media, websites, and all things innovative, it is important to keep things fresh and showcase new ideas. Modern technologies and innovations are emerging almost every six months. For this reason, I stay informed about innovative technology to identify the most suitable advancements for PGBC.

In addition to my technical skills, I have honed abilities through both secular and sacred work environments. With over twenty years of secular work experience and ten years in secular leadership, I possess strong management skills and business acumen. I have successfully managed and led teams in for-profit and non-profit organizations. My education, experience, and expertise give me insight into effective organizational management. I have worked for Wal-Mart, Target, and Dollar General, and I completed an internship with non-profit organizations such as the West Tennessee Area Boy Scouts of America and the Metro Forum. In other words, I have marketed organizations and identified their key economic factors. This experience has equipped me to develop talent and manage systems effectively.

Outside of secular work experience and leadership, I also have over twenty years of transformational ministry leadership experience. This experience includes pastoral care, youth ministry, adult ministry, Christian education, preaching, teaching, and much more. Since my initial call to ministry, I have developed my pastoral care skills. I have supported and nurtured patients, veterans, inmates, and members who have experienced loss, healing, alienation, deliverance, successes, failures, and so much more. People under my pastoral care receive mentorship, reflection, and empowerment. Portsmouth is a city at its lowest moment. The city's residents are looking for people to bring life and support to the community. Although I am new to being the senior pastor of a church, I am not new to providing pastoral care to people of diverse backgrounds.

During my teenage years at BMBC#1, I served in youth and young adult ministry. Due to my passionate dedication, I became the youth president. While at PRBC, I assisted children and young people with planning, marketing, and executing ministry

activities. From 2014 to 2016, I led the Boys to Men ministry at CIBC. As the ministry leader, I implemented a curriculum that guided the young boys in becoming productive young men. Additionally, I combined teaching with collaborative partnerships and impactful activities with other organizations. The young boys discovered they could have fun while being Christians. Through this experience in youth and young adult ministry, I recognize the importance of PGBC's goal to have a vibrant youth and young adult ministry.

For most of my time in ministry, I have participated in the church evangelistic efforts. Of note, I served as ministry leader of evangelism at CIBC. Every quarter, there would be an in-person evangelistic event to reach the community around the church. This event required us to knock on doors and talk with people one-on-one. Plus, there was a dial-a-prayer room where members could call in to ask for prayer. These efforts reaped benefits with increased membership. Given that there is a community across the street from PGBC, evangelism is a primary area of focus that helps the church grow.

Like evangelism, Christian education is an integral part of ministry. Educating new converts and seasoned saints through the Word of God is vital. Included in my spiritual gift matrix is my ability to teach. From an early age, I have been teaching. With a less educated population, it is incumbent to implement a Christian education program that is even more detailed than at EFBC. At EFBC, I implemented a Christian education program, which included leadership development sessions, and created a new member's manual. Also, I coordinated, managed, and led Vacation Bible School, which increased in participation each year.

Adapting to the ecumenical ministry setting is a unique skill I have developed as I have worked in various settings, from five churches to five hospitals to one all-male prison. In addition, my theological training is also ecumenical. I learned from different theological perspectives. Through my education and experience, I learned to communicate my faith in a non-anxious way and still hold onto my biblical convictions. Helping to raise a new community of believers requires this type of effort. They cannot communicate their faith in the same way as the saints of old because their experiences are different than them. For the gospel's sake and to share in its blessing, we must become all things to all people so that we might save some people (1 Cor. 19:22-23).

When I enter a new setting, I learn to meet people where they are instead of where I want them to be. This journey excites me about serving the Lord through serving others. I observe the diverse gifts within the Christian community, which aids in ministry because Portsmouth has many individuals in pain seeking to escape dark situations. Demographically, Portsmouth has changed significantly; it has decreased from 50,000 residents in the 1930s and 1940s to just 20,000 today.[7] The Northend community, where PGBC is located, is no longer primarily African American as it was years ago. For this reason, the ministry must adapt. Working in a state prison system, five hospital systems, and five churches, I am unafraid to meet people where they are, whether they are inmates, drug addicts, preachers, or older adults.

Since 2004, my preaching and teaching calling has reached people in hospitals, prisons, conferences, and congregations across several states and countries. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, these straightforward messages and studies have given

[7] Census Authors, "Portsmouth, OH: 2020 ACS Five-Year Estimates Subject," Data Census, https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?tid=ACSST5Y2020.S0101&g=1600000US3964304.

people hope, freshness, the newness of life, and transformation. People are hungering for the Word that meets them where they are.

Gifts and Graces for Ministry and Skill Set

In conclusion, I offer three gifts to this research and to this ministry setting. First, I have led in both secular and sacred environments. God has called me to lead people. The second skill is my ability to revitalize ministry environments. In my calling, the Lord has tasked me to be an agent of revitalization, which goes beyond just offering change. It brings life to ministries that have become stale. The last theme is growth, which is the effect of my preaching, teaching, mentorship, and pastoral care. In bringing energy to ministry, people, including myself, have grown spiritually, emotionally, and mentally.

Synergy Development

After exploring and comparing my ministry journey and context, the revitalization of leaders through transformational change is the ideal subject for this project. "Revitalization is the process of reconnecting a local church with the life and mission of God."[8] The credence for renewal begins when persons do not receive their primary needs, which leads to stress and a search for wholeness.[9] The basic need for PGBC members is a vibrant relationship with God that reaches beyond themselves and into the world. Stress and maze can be felt throughout the community of Portsmouth. Leadership, church, and

[8] Darren Cronshaw, "Revitalization Consultancy Models: Australian Church Case Studies," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 19, no. 2 (2015): 317-45.

[9] Eiko Takamizawa, "Revitalization Movement Theory and Japanese Mission," *Torch Trinity Journal* 7 (2004): 168-175.

civic see the need for continuous revitalization. The city and church influencers must be that beacon of life to fight this maze and stress. Fighting this maze connects with one's ability to persevere despite tough times. The city's people are broken and need someone to help to see life and experience wholeness. This dialogue might sound like a fad in the Christian world, particularly for PGBC, because of its historic accomplishments. There are times when we get satisfied with what we have done. We must continue to press toward the mark of God's high calling in Christ Jesus our Lord (Phil. 3:14) It is part of the Holy Spirit's responsibility to help each Christian to bring life to their situation. Here is where my ability to understand accountability merges with our given topic. There have been exemplary accomplishments in the church's history: moving to a new location, inspiring the building of the Fourteenth Street Community Center, starting the Haley House for men, establishing the Trunk or Treat, and so much more.

Despite these historical developments, the Lord expects us to reach and do more and continue bringing life to hurting people. Today, the people who are hurting look different than the congregation demographics. Two people play a role in the church's renaissance: the Holy Spirit and the leadership, which are instruments of the Holy Spirit's work.[10] The Holy Spirit does its work, but the leadership must do theirs. Leaders cannot do spiritual work absent of the Holy Spirit.[11] However, it is not that the leadership does not have the Holy Spirit. The leadership team of PGBC does not see how to meet that need and be an instrument of revitalization for the entire congregation.

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[10] Brian A. DeVries, "Divine Empowerment: The Holy Spirit and Church Revitalization," *In die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi* 49, no. 1 (2015): 3.

[11] DeVries, "Divine Empowerment," 1.

Addressing these indicators begins with leadership, and it is the responsibility of every tier and auxiliary of leadership to help. To help prevent the church from reaching the death sentence, PGBC leadership has to drive the renewal.[12] Essential in leadership is identifying the problem and offering solutions. What are the problems? PGBC recently focused most ministerial efforts on the congregation's members. An evangelistic strategy must focus on youth and young adult's ministry. Youth and young adults push for a new life, such as an energic worship experience. Due to the demographic context of the surrounding area, the church needs to transition to a multicultural setting.

Much of the conversation among leadership and the congregation has focused on past practices. Again, what works well today may not always remain effective in the future. A renewed sense of vitality can help the church become more forward-looking. PGBC should engage in a variety of worship styles and programs. There is a tendency to prefer traditional approaches over new ones. Based on my ecumenical experience and education, the worship styles, and programs at PGBC should combine traditional and contemporary elements. This approach will help reach both seasoned and modern congregants.

PGBC engages in community outreach, but it lacks the evangelistic element of reaching the largest demographic in Portsmouth. Within PGBC's church community, some long-standing members, particularly the older generations, hold strong feelings about the significance of their opinions and ideas. This perspective is often shaped by their years of experience and dedication. However, PGBC must create an atmosphere where everyone feels heard and valued, encouraging respectful dialogue among all

[12] Brosius, "Hope," 130-135.

members including the youth and young adults. This dynamic probably contributed to the alienation of the youth. Ministry should prioritize God's glory and the advancement of His kingdom rather than personal preferences. Leadership and representation should be determined by calling and spiritual maturity, rather than age, money given, or years of experience within the church.

PGBC has struggled to manage change in both its pastoral leadership and programming. Any deviation from the norm tends to raise apprehensions among the members. To effectively implement revitalization through transformational change, it is crucial to communicate the change in a non-threatening manner. Without change, there will not be any diversity within the congregation. A significant portion of the PGBC's population consists of family members of current members, making it largely a family church with only a few individuals who are not related to other church members. Those who are not family members often face pushback. However, a diverse congregation brings a wealth of perspectives, experiences, and talents, enriching the church community and enhancing its ability to serve God's kingdom. The congregation will become more diverse once the evangelistic strategy is successfully established. In the meantime, it is essential to promote diversity within the church.

PGBC's leadership structure has served the church for a long time. Is it still relevant? Does it still make an impact in the community? Will it still make the entire church better Christians? It is clear that the leadership structure no longer meets the current needs of the church and the community. The nature response is to maintain tradition, yet outdated approaches lose impact and do not grow the people. By exploring a

new leadership model that better aligns with the specific needs and unique circumstances of our congregation, we can foster a more hopeful and supportive future for PGBC.

The church's decline also shows up in the rise of secularism, materialism, and skepticism.[13] These three things show up here in Portsmouth. The people in Portsmouth do not see the connection between faith and their situation. As a result, secularism grows, and membership decreases. Secularism is the by-product of not having deepening faith and not communicating faith in a non-anxious way. PGBC must present the Gospel of Jesus Christ in such a way that it meets broken people where they are.

Materialism manifests itself in the fact that people pursue wealth instead of relationships and do not see that the Lord desires us to prosper. They have lost so much and want to regain life. PGBC must show the holistic value of being Christian. God wants every part of our being to prosper, which is fulfillment on the highest level. Since the community has become secular and materialistic, Christianity has no value, making it hard to believe that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord. How can people believe in God who does not meet them where they are or a god who does not want them to prosper? Rehab centers have filled the community. So, why should they believe in God when their family members are on drugs? This is where PGBC leaders must validate that the foundation of a successful rehab is understanding that there is a higher power other than them and that the higher power is God.

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[13] Glenda M. Fisk and Michelle M. Hammond, "Revitalization and Resurrection? Confronting Decline and Change in Religious Organizations," *Journal of Management, Spirituality, and Religion* 18, no. 3 (2021): 177-200. https://doi.org/10.51327/IXEV3410.

The Merging of Context and Calling

Throughout my ministry journey, God has allowed me to minister in a different context drastically different from the previous one. Entering the new setting presented a culture shock, and I had to understand the community's culture. Each ministry setting needed revitalization. I developed ministry models that were applied to the setting. In other words, this is familiar to me and how I do ministry. For example, BMBC#1 is a historic rural church that has stood the test of time and is truly a family community. At the same time, PRBC is an urban church within a central metropolitan area that is poor. Serving as a prison chaplain at EARU in an all-male unit presents different challenges than providing pastoral care at GVSMVA.

As the leader, their expectation of me was to bring energy to each unique setting, and I did so successfully and faithfully. As the new pastor in a new city at a historic church, I inherently present a dynamic ministry. Just hearing or reading the previous sentence highlights the conflict with revival. I have learned to customize each ministry plan to fit the specific context. Through my efforts, I empowered and influenced people in my revitalization initiatives elsewhere. I discovered that there is no cookie-cutter approach to ministry. At PGBC, I need to consider revitalizing ministry leadership based on past successes. The undeniable fact is that it begins with all ministry leadership, not just the pastor. From the research and reflection above, the best way to explore the revitalization of PGBC through transformational change involves the Biblical Foundation: Ezekiel 37:1-14; Historical Foundation: Azusa Street Revival; Theological Foundation: Ecclesiology and Pneumatology; and Interdisciplinary Foundation: Transformational Leadership.

During this project, the leadership team developed aspects of leadership and revitalization. The seminar aims to put these concepts into practice and initiate the revitalization process. This effect empowered them to be pioneers and taught them how to impact their communities. I had three learning goals for the project: the first was to understand the spiritual state of the leaders. Secondly, I hoped to grow in my role as the pastor of PGBC. Lastly, I aimed to learn what learning mechanisms and ministry plans need to be implemented to ensure revitalization. I wanted the community to trust the efforts being undertaken. The next chapter explores the biblical foundation of this project.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

To have freshness to drive growth through a demographic shift, this project's initial foundation for revitalization is the Holy Bible. Several scriptures from the Holy Bible capture the essence of PGBC's revitalization project. Revitalization and ministry freshness span both the Old and New Testaments. Listed below are the most relevant to this project:

a. In Genesis 6, God replenishes the earth after the flood.
b. Moses details how Israel comes out of Egyptian bondage in Exodus 13.
c. In Psalm 51, David restores his relationship with the Lord and Israel.
d. Ezekiel's words revitalize the dry bones in Ezekiel 37.
e. Jesus becomes the restorer of the souls in the Gospels.
f. Paul describes reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5.
g. Paul details how Christians are to put off the old and put on the new in Ephesians 4:17-24.

From these choices, the project's most ideal biblical foundation is Ezekiel's revitalization of the dry bones in Ezekiel 37:1-14. This pericope has a direct correlation with my ministry calling and context. What is seen in the text with the dry bones appears at PGBC and Portsmouth. As a result, this text helps guide revitalization and ministry freshness. This biblical foundation has two parts. First, this chapter undergoes a thorough exegesis, which includes four subsections: the survey overviews Ezekiel 37:1-14; the contextual analysis explores the world in which Ezekiel lived, wrote, and served in

ministry; the formal (literary) analysis explains the literary form of Ezekiel; and the detailed analysis provides an analysis of every verse, key terms, and some relevant themes. Secondly, the conclusion and summary show how the study of this passage is foundational to this doctoral project. By the end of this chapter, Ezekiel 37:1-14 proves a scriptural connection to this doctoral work.

Exegesis

> The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." Then he said to me, "Prophesy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD." So, I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude. Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' Therefore, prophesy and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD." Ezekiel 37:1-14, (NRSV-UE)

Survey

Ezekiel 37:1-14 transitions God's people from judgment to renewal.[1] That movement to renewal uses our five senses: seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, and tasting.[2] The pericope's background begins with Ezekiel 1-24 as the prophet discusses God's current punishment of His people. The kings' leadership influenced them into an idolatrous lifestyle. God sent the prophet Ezekiel to plead with them to turn back to him. However, Ezekiel's warning did not cause immediate repentance. Ezekiel's forcefulness in those initial chapters spoke to the magnitude of their wickedness.[3] This scenario proves how others' actions affect others' situations. What occurred during Ezekiel's prophetic ministry would be a vital moment in the history of the divinely chosen people. God's people were now in demise at the Babylonians' hands.

Although they are under Babylonian rule, God's chosen people caused their predicament. God never intended for his people to receive punishment. Their actions caused them to receive the sentence of expulsion from the promised land, similar to what occurred with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.[4] In 597 BCE, the Babylonians captured Judah; in 587 BCE, the captors took the city of Jerusalem. God's people were now in a strange land and had lost everything precious to them. Ezekiel was in the

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[1] John Waters, "When the Vultures are Finished, Can there be Life? The Valley of Dry Bones and the Futures of the Black Church," in *The Recovery of Black Presence: An Interdisciplinary Exploration: Essay in Honor of Dr. Charles B. Copher,* eds. Randall C. Bailey and Jacquelyn Grant (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 95.

[2] Amelia Rebecca Basdeo-Hill, "Sight and Sounds of Death Valley: A Close Reading of Ezekiel 37:1-14," *Old Testament Essays* 31, no. 3 (2018): 534-552.

[3] Basdeo-Hill, "Sight and Sounds," 534, 541.

[4] Joel Kamsen Tihitshak Biwd, "The Restoration of the 'Dry Bones' in Ezekiel 37:1-14: An Exegetical and Theological Analysis," *Scriptura* 118, no. 1 (2019): 2-3, https://dx.doi.org/10.7833/118-1-1528.

ministry for twenty years, from 593 BCE - 571 BCE. During his first six or seven years of prophetic ministry, he described the divine judgment that the people would receive. In the final thirteen years, he declares hope if they turn back towards God.[5]

Ezekiel 37-48 depicts how the Lord would save and restore His people. As the story unfolds, God places Ezekiel in a unique location. The prophet does not know exactly how he arrived there, but the text states that God carried him to a valley of dry bones. These bones were devoid of life. God is present with Ezekiel in a valley lacking vitality and hope.[6] At the core of these verses is the power of what the prophet speaks. This power emerges only with the assistance of the wind (the Spirit). In verses seven and eight, the bones begin to come together. Verses eleven and twelve reveal the magnitude of the resurrection.[7] The bones would unite, and God would restore them to their former state. This action in the valley reflects the extremes of Ezekiel's ministry.[8] Not only was he a bearer of judgment; God also used him as a wounded healer for a hopeless nation. These bones became the restored whole house of Israel.

God uses this picturesque image of the valley of bones to show how he can bring freshness and life to dry people using the actions of his divinely called leaders.[9] The people of God are now in Babylonian captivity, but they will not stay there. This biblical

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[5] Water, "Vultures," 96.

[6] Biwl, "The Restoration," 5-6.

[7] Biwl, "The Restoration," 11-12.

[8] Christopher R. Seitz, "Ezekiel 37:1-14," *Interpretation* 46, no. 1 (1992): 55-56, https://doi.org/10-1177/002096439204600106.

[9] Joel Kamsen Tihitshak Biwul, "The Vision of Dry Bones in Ezekiel 37:1-28: Resonating Ezekiel's Message as the African Prophet of Hope," *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 73, no. 3 (August 2017): 2.

story shows how people can become revived and have confidence in God and who they are as God's people.

Contextual Analysis

Ezekiel authored this book and served in his prophetic ministry while social and political upheaval existed. According to the first chapter of the prophecy, he is the son of Buzi, a priest. At his birth, the Babylonians were in power after the destruction of the Assyrian empire. Israel has already moved from judges to kings.[10] The first king of Israel was Saul, and then David. Israel remained united under two other kings: Solomon (1Kgs 1-11) and Rehoboam I (1 Kgs.14:21-16:34). Then Israel separated and became two nations due to conflict. Separation among the United Kingdom of Israel was the beginning of the fall of both nations. By the time of the writing of Ezekiel, Israel's northern kingdom had already fallen to the Assyrians in 721-722 BCE.[11] See, separation leads to our destruction.

There was no consistency on the throne of the now-still-standing southern kingdom as the people worshipped idols and mistreated each other. There were more evil kings than righteous ones. For example, when Manasseh was the king (687 BCE-642 BCE), the biblical text considered him one of the worst kings ever. (2 Kgs. 21:1-18, 24:3-4, 2 Chron. 33-34) After him, Amon (642 BCE -640 BCE) reigned as another horrible king (2 Kgs. 21:19-26, 2 Chron. 33:21-25), while Amon's son, Josiah (640 BCE – 602

[10] Tounoussia Sassou, "The Dry Bones: Narratological Study of Ezekiel 37:1-14," (Ph.D. diss., Newburgh Theological Seminary and College of the Bible, 2023), 13-19.

[11] Gershon Galil, *The Chronology of the Kings of Israel and Judah*, vol. 9 (London, UK: Brill, 2023), 83-97.

BCE), was one of the bright spots of Israel's kings. Josiah purged the nation of Israel of cult objects and discarded idolatry. At the same time, he reorganized the worship of the Lord for his people (2 Kgs. 22-23, 2 Chron. 34-36). Josiah's son, Jehoahaz, reversed his father's work (2 Kgs. 23, 2 Chron. 34). His operation was similar to that of his grandfather, Amon. At Eliakim (Jehoiakim), another son of Josiah was a puppet king who also undid more of Josiah's reforms (2 Kgs. 23:31-37, 2 Chron. 36:5-8) Jehoichin installed Mattaniah as a leader (2 Kgs. 24, 2 Chron. 36:9-11). The Babylonians and Nebuchadnezzar overthrew the southern kingdom under Zedekiah's reign.

Israel's social environment was primarily in three locations: Judah, Egypt, and Babylon.[12] During Ezekiel's ministry, the people suffered economic poverty, political lethargy, and religious stagnation. The Babylonians had already captured and deported the initial citizens to Babylon in 597 BCE, and the devastation continued from 588 BCE to 587 BCE when they captured the holy city of Jerusalem. The initial deportation served three main purposes.

1. It would strip the people of their national identity. They would become Babylonian prisoners.
2. They would replace their leadership and destroy their political structures. No structure or governmental system to govern the community meant that there would be chaos.
3. The Babylonians could force the exiles to enlist in the military. These efforts would increase revenue for the economic system.[13]

Despite their circumstances, the exiles remained focused on Yahweh's faithfulness. Since He liberated them from Egyptian bondage, He could also free them

[12] Daniel L. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapter 1-24* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), xx-xxii.

[13] Block, *The Book of Ezekiel*, xxi.

from the oppressive Babylonian refugee system.[14] Connected to the social and political contexts is an understanding of the ideology present during the time Ezekiel was written. The Israelites transitioned from a free nation that worshiped God to an exiled, captive people, severed from their religious and cultural identity. The exile was a confinement of the mind, body, and spirit. The destruction in 597 BCE and 587 BCE shattered their harmony.[15] Throughout history, prior to the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles of the northern and southern kingdoms (2 Kgs 18, 24), the United Kingdom of Israel had been formed by their worship of God. Zion in Jerusalem was the site of divine presence. Now, their spiritual, economic, political, and social well-being has diminished. With everything at stake, God's chosen people contemplated how to make sense of the exile and how to perceive the future. The feeling that God would not release them from this situation must have weighed heavily on their minds.[16]

This new social, religious, political, and economic location changed their ideology and eschatological view. They wanted a new future away from the Babylonians. They envisioned a prophetic eschatological perspective under a renewed creative order by the end of their life. This view differs from apocalyptic eschatology, a future heavenly vision at the end of time.[17]

The people wanted a new future back home before they died and did not want to wait for heaven to get there. In other words, the first fourteen verses of Ezekiel 37

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[14] Block, *The Book of Ezekiel*, xxi-xxxii.

[15] Jana Coetzee, "Ideology as a Factor for Eschatological Outlook Hidden in a Text: A Study Between Ezekiel and 4A386 fragment li," *HTS Teologiese Theological Studies* 72, no. 4 (2006): 1-11.

[16] Coetzee, "Ideology," 1-11.

[17] Coetzee, "Ideology," 1-11.

reimaged the broken people of God. Despite their choices and the captors' oppressive leadership causing their brokenness, they yearned for restoration from who and where they were.[18] Ezekiel pushed hard on a radical reversal and celebrated a future joyfully beyond the Babylonian occupation. What unified the people was a faithful God, a promised land, and that they were the divinely promised people.[19]

Formal (Literary) Analysis

The prophecy of Ezekiel underwent a comprehensive process to become the book it is today.[20] It began with God giving Ezekiel the prophetic oracle.[21] Then Ezekiel spoke to the people after receiving the divine message. Ezekiel's message is that the people are dry, but God can give them life and a hopeful future. The prophet writes the oracle for future generations to learn from their ancestors' mistakes. Then, Ezekiel compiles all other essential details of his prophecy in his book. Next, the editors arrange the events. Lastly, the book adds the events of Ezekiel's life, his message, and his audience to the prophecy.[22]

Another unique literary characteristic of Ezekiel is the number of literary formulae.[23] A literary formula uses recurring words, phrases, and patterns to illustrate the

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[18] Jacqueline Grey, "Acts of the Spirit: Ezekiel 37 in the Light of Contemporary Speech-Act Theology," *Journal of Biblical and Pneumatological Research* 1 (2009): 69.

[19] Block, *The Book of Ezekiel,* xxi-xxii.

[20] Block, *The Book of Ezekiel,* xxix.

[21] Allen Dwight Callahan, "Perspective for a Study of African Religion from the Valley of Dry Bones," *Nova Religio* 7, no. 1 (2003): 52, 56.

[22] Block, *The Book of Ezekiel,* xxix-xxxi.

[23] Block, *The Book of Ezekiel,* 4-9.

unique ways God communicates with His people. This recurrence identifies the words are God's Word. For this reason, this exchange usually takes place between a leader and God. That leader then communicates God's Word to the people.

In Ezekiel chapter thirty-seven, the divine coercion formula of verse one asserts God's ability to compel a human messenger to act.[24] This standard type of interaction between God and the prophets begins in Ezekiel 1:1-3.

In the same verse, there is a formula for divine inspiration formula.[25] Ezkiel 37:1, NRSV-UE declares, "The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones." Inspiration proves the actions of the Holy Spirit in the prophetic message.[26]

Both of these literary formulas in verse one function similarly; it just depends on the tone. Inspiration carries a positive tone, while coercion is a more forceful one. Either way, Ezekiel had no choice.

Another literary formula is the messenger formula of verses five, nine, and twelve, where the divinely appointed person functions as a divine messenger.[27] The phrase, "thus said the Lord," signals a messenger formula. Note below:

> Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live…Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live…Therefore prophesy and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves and bring you up

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[24] Derek Leman, "Ezekiel 1:1-3, under God's Coercion," Messianic Jewish Musings, https://derek4messiah. wordpress.com/2009/11/17/ezekiel-11-3-under-gods-coercion/.

[25] Block, *The Book of Ezekiel,* 7.

[26] Gary C. Hampton, "The Holy Spirit and the Prophets," Forthright Magazine, https://forthright.net/articles/holy-spirit-prophet/#.~:text=The%20work%20of%20 the%20Holy,in%20the%20future%2C%20or%20foretelling.

[27] Block, *The Book of Ezekiel,* 6.

> from your graves, O my people and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. Ezk. 37:5,9,12, NRSV-UE

The divine imputing formula signals that God imparts the spirit in human beings.[28] The bones' transformation in Ezk. 37:9-10, 14 is due to the spirit:

> Then he said to me, 'Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath." Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath come into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude…I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil, then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act', says the Lord. Ezk. 37:9-10,14 NRSV-UE.

One of the most prominent formulae in Ezekiel is the divine recognition formula, which appears in Ezekiel 37:13-14.[29] It indicates that the reader will know something about the Lord:[30]

> You shall know that I am the Lord when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord (Ezk. 37:13-14, NRSV-UE).

The last formula is the signatory formula of verse fourteen, which proves that God is the originator: "I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord." They know that it was God.[31]

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[28] Rony Kozman, "Ezekiel's Promised Spirit as Adam's Revelatory Spirit in the Hodayot," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 26 (2019): 36-38.

[29] Marvin A. Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing Incorporated, 2013), 14-15.

[30] Block, *The Book of Ezekiel,* 8; Kozman, "Promised," 40-42; Walter Zimmerli, Leonard Jay Greenspoon, and James D. Martin, *Ezekiel 2: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapter 25-48* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1983), 257, https://www.muse.jhu.edu/book/45970.

[31] Block, *The Book of Ezekiel,* 6.

In addition, Biwul identifies six literary theological imports related to the bones' description:

1. The pericope identifies God as a hand, the Spirit, the breath, or the word.
2. The resurrection theology signals that the people of Judah and Israel are returning to life from death.[32]
3. A restoration theology presents a future where God's people regain what they lost.[33]
4. By recognizing God's identity and his actions, one sees God's faithful commitment to his unfaithful people.
5. Acknowledging God's sovereignty, he has brought these bones back to life.
6. God's people must obey God for renewal, resurrection, restoration, and reassembly.[34]

A close reading of Ezekiel displays other unique characteristics. First, Ezekiel authored his book in the first person from the beginning to the end of the book. In other words, Ezekiel is an autobiographical prophetic narrative. He is in the story and writing about it in his words as things happen. With this narrative, God's glory deeply impacted and influenced the author. He does not waste any time elaborating on the awesomeness of God's glory. Another characteristic is Ezekiel's disdain and rejection of false prophets and illegitimate leaders.[35] He talked intently about the leaders' actions and how God's people went down the wrong path, and now they are under Babylonian authority.

The three-part speech-act approach is another literary way to explain the words of Ezekiel and God in this pericope. The locutionary level suggests that the address offers something significant. What makes the conversation significant is that God uses the dry bones to talk about the whole house of Israel. Israel is currently in bondage. God

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[32] Michael Konkel, "The Vision of the Dry Bones (Ezek 37:1-14): Resurrection, Restoration, or What?" *Ezekiel* (2017): 110-112, 116-118.

[33] Konkel, "The Vision," 112-116.

[34] Biwul, "The Restoration," 5-9.

[35] Block, *The Book of Ezekiel,* xxix-10.

choosing Ezekiel as a prophet makes it locutionary for him. What both God and Ezekiel say is meaningful because it impacted a nation of people.[36]

The second part, the illocutionary dimension, theorizes that this speech attempts to inspire actions. The Lord's illocutionary force instructed Ezekiel on how these bones would live. On the other hand, Ezekiel's illocutionary act was to speak to the bones and the wind. The perlocutionary level, the third part, results in a completed action.[37] Ezekiel's obedience was the perlocutionary effect of the Lord's command, while the bones coming to life were the perlocutionary effect of his prophesying.[38] The perlocutionary means was the Spirit. The Spirit brought life to the bones and propelled Ezekiel's obedience.[39] This effect refers to what happened to man in Genesis when man became a living soul after the Spirit breathed into man. In order words, the work of the Spirit, people, leadership, and God is critical in bringing life to a community.

Detailed Analysis: The Text

The detailed analysis evaluates the text, terms, and theme. In verse one, God places Ezekiel in a valley of bones by the hand of God through the spirit of the Lord (Ezk. 37:1 NRSV-UE).[40] Ezekiel begins, "The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was

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[36] Grey, "Acts," 69-82.

[37] Grey, "Acts," 69-82.

[38] Biwul calls it, "The impact of the prophet's obedience to the divine command." Biwul, "Resonating Ezekiel's Message," 4.

[39] Grey, "Acts," 69-82.

[40] Basdeo-Hill, "Sights," 539-540.

full of bones." Whether by divine coercion or inspiration, God operates as an agency of conveyance, transporting the prophet to a place of death.[41] The transport resembles Enoch or Elijah in the Old Testament and Jesus in the New Testament with the temptation. Like the story of Enoch (Gen. 5:24), Elijah (2 Kgs 2:11), or Jesus (Mt. 17:1-13, Mk.9:2-8, Lk. 9:28-36), Ezekiel does not explain precisely how he gets here. He was in Babylon, but where is this valley? Ezekiel does not offer any suggestions regarding the valley's location. We only know that Ezekiel is in a valley.

This place shocked Ezekiel. Ezekiel explains in verse two, "He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry." Something must have happened a long time ago because the bones were dry. This dryness meant that the flesh on the bones had decayed. For bones to be dry, someone or something must have died at least several days or even years ago.[42]

The conversation between God and the prophet begins in verse three. In that dialogue, there is textual tension between God and the prophet.[43] "He said to me, 'Mortal, can these bones live?' I answered, O Lord God, you know." God asks Ezekiel a question about the viability of the bones. How would Ezekiel know about bringing dry bones back to life? God is the almighty Creator. In comparison to God, he is powerless.[44] Remember,

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[41] Block, *The Book of Ezekiel,* 32-34; Zimmerli, "Ezekiel 2," 253-254, 259-260; Basdeo-Hill, "Sights," 539-540.

[42] Dorothy BEA Akoto, "Can These Bones Live?: Re-reading Ezekiel 37:1-14 in the HIV/Aids Context," in *Grant Me Justice!: HIV/AIDS and Gender Readings of the Bible*, eds. Musa W. Dube and Musimbi R.A. Kanyoro (New York, NY: Maryknoll, 2004), 102; Zimmerli, "Ezekiel 2," 254-255.

[43] Lawrence Boadt, Vicente Collado Bertomeu, and Luis Alonso Schökel, "The Dramatic Structure of Ezekiel 37, 1-14. The Vision of the Dry Bones Received," *Palabra, Prodigio, Poes*ía (2003): 197-198.

[44] Zimmerli, "Ezekiel 2," 260; Waters, "Vultures," 98.

the Lord divided the Red Sea and helped David defeat the giant with a slingshot. Ezekiel could only answer, "Lord God, you know." It seems reminiscent of what Peter tells Jesus about him loving Jesus and feeding the sheep in John 21:17, "Lord you know everything, you know that I love you." In his mind, Ezekiel is probably asking himself some questions. What is the origin of the bones? Why am I here? What does this transportation in this valley mean for my people and me?[45] The following verses present literary halving, which puts the literary flow into two parts. One half is verses four through eight, and the other is verses nine through ten.[46] Both have literary formulae and organization and form a parallelistic connection with each other.

The first half of the device, verses four through eight, read as follows:

> Then he said to me, "Prophesy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD." So, I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them.

Here is the second half of the literary construction in verses nine through ten:

> Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

After answering the question by turning the solution toward the Lord God, Ezekiel receives God's initial command. Ezekiel 37:4 says, "Then he said to me,

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[45] Seitz, "Ezekiel," 53.

[46] Block, "Chapter 25-48," 34-35.

'Prophesy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.'" Ezekiel's words are the Word of the Lord. This text suggests that the word of the Lord has the power to change these bones. In verse five, the messenger formula specifies that Ezekiel must proclaim what "thus saith the Lord." Ezekiel 37:5 explains, "Thus said the Lord God to these bones: 'I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.'" Through Ezekiel's words given from the Lord, God's breath enters the bones, and they come to life again. He transitions from being powerless to powerful with the word from God. The prophet acts as God's spokesperson.[47] Ezekiel understood the authority of the word because he likely witnessed his priest father ministering it. It is no surprise that he did not question the Master vocally. He trusted the Lord; thus, he had no other choice.[48]

The sixth verse applies the recognition formula that bringing life into bones is a function of knowing God as the life-giver. The Lord illuminates, "I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord." "The bones are first of all fastened to each other again by means of sinews."[49]

Ezekiel decides in verse seven, "So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to bone." This verse defines how the Lord will breathe in the bones and will cause them to live.[50] The noise reveals that the flesh and sinews (tendons) are merging. Ezekiel could have questioned the direction of God, and his concern would have been valid. If he does

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[47] Zimmerli, "Ezekiel 2," 260.

[48] Boadt, "Dramatic Structure," 198-199.

[49] Zimmerli, "Ezekiel 2," 260.

[50] Zimmerli, "Ezekiel 2," 256.

nothing, bones remain as they are, which are dry and dead. If Ezekiel wanted something different to happen, he had to do something different. The text does not indicate how quickly the prophet responded to the command. We do not know whether he did it in five minutes or two hours, but there was no pushback by any words or actions. The bones' response suggests that obeying the word of the Lord causes movement.

Although the tendons, bones, and skin were all together, verse eight identifies that the process was still incomplete. Ezekiel responds, "I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them." In Genesis 2:7, the spirit of God, רוח (the ruach), breathed into humanity, and humanity became a living soul. The spirit was necessary to bring life.

> Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude. Ezk. 37:9-10, NRSV-UE

Given this fact, the divine inputting formula of verses nine and ten illustrate how a human being becomes a living soul. Verse nine begins with the messenger formula, where the action comes from "Thus says the Lord." The prophet now is to prophesy to the wind, and he did as commanded, and prophesies to the four winds, coming from each direction. After prophesying to the wind, these bones finally become more than just bones; they are living people. Breathing is the one thing that determines the viability of creation. God's creation must breathe to be alive.

The narrative leaves the reader with a cliffhanger if the text stops at this verse. What does this all mean? Who are these people? Why do all of this? God responds,

> Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.'

> Therefore, prophesy and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD." Ezk. 37:11-14, NRSV-UE

Verse eleven serves two functions: (1) it explains the scene of the vision and (2) it initiates God's transformation of this vision of horror into a promise in verses eleven through fourteen.[51] By the end of these verses, God answers the questions posed by the readers. Here, God identifies the bones as the entire house of Israel. The northern (Ephraim) and southern (Judah) kingdoms represent all of Israel. As mentioned earlier, the last time there was a unified kingdom of Israel was under the reign of Rehoboam I. God is now gathering His people together.[52] The entire house of Israel has lost hope and experienced separation; both the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles created a divide between them and God. The people lamented while they were in exile.[53] Exile signified the downfall of God's chosen people. Now, the Almighty is rectifying the situation.

Detailed Analysis: Terms

The second part of the detailed analysis evaluates the key terms and phrases of the text. These keywords and phrases in Ezekiel chapter thirty-seven helped guide and influence the project's trajectory. The first phrase/word is the "hand of God/Lord." "The

[51] Zimmerli, "Ezekiel 2," 257; Waters, "Vultures," 98-99.

[52] Waters, "Vulture," 100.

[53] Seitz, "Ezekiel," 54; Shawn Zelig Aster, "Our Hope is Lost; We are Cut Off," *Ancient, Biblical, and Near Eastern Research* 4, no. 2 (December 2024): 101-118, https://doi.org/10.35068/aabner.1189.

hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones" (Ezk. 37:1, NRSV-UE).

The hand of God/Lord is a common phrase within Ezekiel's prophecy. "Hand" is יָד ("yad") in Hebrew. When connected to the divine, it refers to God's might and ability.[54] In verse one of this chapter, יָד is in the feminine singular form, and Lord is the divine name of God. Ezekiel 1:3 expressed the ministerial call of Ezekiel by the hand of the Lord being on him. "The word of the Lord came to the priest Ezekiel son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Chebar, and the hand of the Lord was on him there" Ezk. 1:3, NRSV-UE.

Two chapters over, Ezekiel indicated that the יָד of the Lord was still upon him. "The spirit lifted me up and bore me away; I went in bitterness in the heart of my spirit, the hand of the Lord being strong upon me" (Ezk. 3:14, NRSV-UE). In other words, Ezekiel spoke of the fact that the יָד of the Lord was upon him. In the eighth chapter, the prophet changes the language by saying, "the hand of the Lord God," but adding "God" does not alter the explication. That יָד was upon him as the prophet. There are over one hundred references to יָד in the Book of Ezekiel, and each time it refers to might, ability, and power.

While the יָד of the Lord is cheerful, the יָד of the Lord might be destructive as it relates to trauma.[55] God's hand caused floods and plagues and even allowed Babylonian captivity, the context in which Ezekiel authored his book. One must consider why God's hand is in this situation. It does signal presence and power, but why is God showing

[54] Akoto, "Can These Bones Live," 103-104.

[55] Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, "Deconstructing Terror in Ezekiel: The Valley of Bones' Vision as Response to Trauma," *Ezekiel* (2017): 391-413.

force? Ezekiel ended this prophetic oracle by showing God's hand, giving grace, and offering hope to his people.

Other than the articles in Ezekiel 37:1-14, the most used word is רוח (ruach) in Hebrew. There are ten occurrences of this word in the pericope.[56] The Brown-Driver-Briggs lexicon lists nine different meanings of the word רוח.[57] Of note, there are three primary definitions, "breath, wind, spirit…1. breath of mouth…2. Wind…3 Spirit, which breaths quickly in animation or agitation, temper, and disposition."[58] In this pericope, the ruach functions in several ways. It commences in verse one: "He brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley (Ez. 37:1b, NRSV-UE). In verse one, the Spirit of the Lord, with the hand of the Lord, leads Ezekiel to a valley of dry bones. Here, the רוח serves the purpose of transporting Ezekiel to this unique place.[59]

The spirit in verses four through ten is the giving and recreator of life. The meaning of רוח shifts from spirit to breath in verses five and six. Observe below:

> Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: 'I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you know that I am the Lord. Ezk. 37:5-6, NRSV-UE

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[56] The two occurrences in Ezekiel 36 connect to this pericope which means "new heart" in Ezekiel 37: 26 have such a close relationship that the prophet uses them interchangeably. Kozman, "Promised," 42; Melissa Buck, "רוח in Ezekiel 37 and πνευμα in John 3: Allusion, Pun, Typology" (M.A. thesis, Concordia University of Edmonton, 2015), 14.

[57] Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew, and English Lexicon with An Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic* (Peabody, MA: Henderickson Publishers, 2001), 924-925.

[58] Brown, "Hebrew and English Lexicon," 924-925.

[59] Buck, "רוח in Ezekiel 37," 11.

These verses present "the idea of living and giving life requires breath."[60] Four occurrences in the text have definite article, which suggests a specific entity or person.[61] The Spirit, the breath, or the wind instead of just any spirit, wind, or breath causes the living effect. Regarding understanding רוח, verse nine requires careful reading because Ezekiel uses two unique meanings of ruach here. Two of these three occurrences use the definite article, which suggests the רוח. Ezekiel elaborates in verse nine: Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." The spirit is someone who listens and follows the instruction of the word of the Lord. From verses one to eight, Ezekiel identifies רוח as the incomplete component of the vision, while in verses nine and ten, רוח is the primary subject.[62]

The last occurrence of the word discusses how God places His spirit in the entire house of Israel. They live and possess their land because of God placing His spirit in the whole house of Israel. This divine impartation indicates divine recognition and reveals who God is and what He does. It validates the actions of Ezekiel mentioned in the earlier verses of the pericope. The spirit empowers the people to act as described in the previous chapter of Ezekiel. Ezekiel 36:27 states, "I will put my spirit within you and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances." The Spirit is crucial in this text as it demonstrates that God must guide us to adhere to His commands.

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[60] Buck, "רוח in Ezekiel 37," 14.

[61] Buck, "רוח in Ezekiel 37," 14.

[62] Buck, "רוח in Ezekiel 37," 16.

Commanded is the third word/phrase of significance. “Tsavah” (צָוָה) is the Hebrew word for command. It is a military leadership term where the leader says something and gives instructions, and the follower must decide to obey. Ezekiel uses the word in verses seven and ten to indicate his commitment to God. Ezekiel tells the intended audiences, original readers, and future recipients implicitly; that doing as God commanded keeps them from exile.

> So, I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone… I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude. Ezk. 37:7,10, NRSV-UE

Although there is only one specific textual occurrence, the “word of the Lord” is meaningful and relevant to this text and project. “Dabar” (דָּבָר) is the Hebrew word here, which means speech or word. Ezekiel references this phrase in verse four: “Then he said to me, ‘Prophesy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.’

In Jeremiah, Ezekiel’s contemporary, “the דָּבָר of the Lord” is also a common prophetic phrase. There are over fifty-five occurrences in Ezekiel alone. Because debar means word or speech, every time the Lord speaks, it is the דָּבָר of Yahweh. As a result, the דָּבָר of the Lord expands in this text. That means God has a lot to say in the pericope, so we have to notice it in Ezk.37:9,11-14, NRSV-UE:

> He [the Lord] said to me, “Mortal, can these bones live?” I answered, “O Lord GOD, you know.” …Then he [the Lord] said to me, “Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.”…Then he [the Lord] said to me, “Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’ Therefore, prophesy and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD when

> I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD."

"Prophesy" (נבא)is the fifth word/phrase that helped guide this research. This word נבא is "naba" in Hebrew. This word, נבא, indicates that Ezekiel is speaking under divine inspiration about the futurist goal of restoration. He has two prophetic methodologies in this text: forthtell and foretell. In verses seven through eight and ten, this prophet forthtells to the bones and the wind. Forthtelling occurs when he preaches to cause a response from the bones and the wind.

> I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude. Ezk. 37:7,8,10 NRSV-UE

Also, he foretells in verses twelve through fourteen, where God shows the future restoration of the whole house of Israel. God promises his people future glory. See below:

> Therefore, prophesy and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD." Ezk. 37:12-14, NRSV-UE

Bones, flesh, skin, and sinews are also essential in this pericope. The text says,

> …He… set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones…Mortals, can these bones live…Prophesy to these bones…O' dry bones, hear the word of the Lord…I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin…Suddenly, there was noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bones…There were on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them…Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel…Our bones are dried up. Ezk. 37:1-8,11, NRSV-UE.

Ezekiel associates these words with the restoration and resurrection of the people of Judah and Israel from their depraved state. The terms describe and detail the parts of humanity. They are the building blocks of a human being. For this reason, they refer to human beings. Since these body parts are coming back together, the Lord brings the people of Judah (the southern kingdom) and Ephraim (the northern kingdom) together. Simultaneously, one must consider why God has to get his people back. Something happens because the bones are dry, and the sinews have been separated. Consideration must be given to the fact that separation could refer to the ritualistic slaughter during Ezekiel's time.[63] Slaughter is not something to celebrate. However, despite what has caused the split, God still can bring bones together, the whole house of Israel, and even the rest of humanity.

Detailed Analysis: Two Themes

Engaging two themes is the last section of the detailed analysis. Ezk.37:1-14 presents two themes that impacted the work of this project. The first theme is how things come to life. Bringing things to life can be a three-step or a two-step process.[64] The first step in the three-step process begins with Ezekiel prophesying to connect the bones with the joints. In the second step, he prophesies over the bones again, where the skin covers the bones and joints. In the final stage, the prophet speaks to the wind. Unlike the three-step process, the first step of the two-step process combines steps one and two and

[63] Smith-Christopher "Deconstructing Terror in Ezekiel," 391-413.

[64] Konkel, "The Vision," 116-118.

concludes with step three, Ezekiel prophesies to the wind.[65] What is vital here is that which dead came back to life and be restored and resurrected. Situations and people may seem dead, but they can return to life.

Secondly, this pericope demonstrates trauma.[66] Trauma is a psychosocial element within the text. It may not be the most celebrated theme in biblical literature, but it appears in both the Old and New Testaments. Trauma refers to a situation or a series of events that elicits a dramatic emotional response. While Ezekiel remains obedient to God, he still experiences an emotional reaction. He finds himself in a valley of dry bones, a place marked by sustained death. As previously mentioned, it takes hours and days for bones to dehydrate. Someone had to die for there to be bones present. In any case, death constitutes a traumatic event. The individuals in Ezekiel chapter thirty-seven were once mere bones, yet now they are alive again. Witnessing such a transformation in one's life would also provoke intense emotional reactions.

Christopher describes the traumatic picture of the dry bones as a reaction to colonialization caused by Babylonians. This enemy nation caused harm to God's chosen people of Israel. He identifies three ways to understand this trauma that Israel experienced. The first approach is to view it as a history of "imperial archaeology," where one sees one nation's political subordination and oppression over another.[67] Israel was separated from their identity. Another perspective is looking at the hardship and physical toil that it had on the people themselves.[68] The bones were dry, and death

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[65] Coetzee, "Ideology," 1-11.

[66] Smith-Christopher, "Deconstructing Terror," 391-413.

[67] Smith-Christopher, "Deconstructing Terror," 391-413.

[68] Smith-Christopher, "Deconstructing Terror," 391-413.

surrounded them. The Babylonian harmed the people politically, physically, mentally, and emotionally. Ultimately, this captivity was a turning point in God's people's life. Ezekiel wrestles with the punishment and promise. These opposing ends of the spectrum caused trauma and tension.[69]

The third lens is looking through the stories as they passed from generation to generation.[70] With the oral tradition, it is impossible to imagine how people told this story of these dry bones. From every angle, there is trauma here and among us. The question is how we deal with it. Do we remain dry, or do we come back to life?

Summary, Conclusion, and Connection to the Project

Of all the biblical passages in the Old and New Testaments, Ezekiel 37:1-14 presents one of the clearest articulations of the problem and solution regarding ministry revitalization. This exegetical work examines six essentials for revitalization. First, the hand of the Lord, through the Spirit of the Lord, must revitalize the ministry of PGBC. If this does not happen, PGBC will fall short of fulfilling its destiny and purpose in Portsmouth, Ohio. Ezekiel was unaware of why the Lord would bring him to a valley filled with extremely dry bones. This biblical research indicates that the Lord would not have sent Ezekiel there had the place been vibrant. God meets humanity at the point of their need, utilizing people to assist others. Clearly, there is a need to uncover answers that can foster revitalization in Portsmouth, Ohio.

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[69] Refael Furman, "Trauma and Post-Trauma in the Book of Ezekiel," *Old Testament Essays* 33, no. 1 (2020): 32-33.

[70] Smith-Christopher, "Deconstructing Terror," 391-413.

Second, Ezekiel discovered the bones were dry, and the valley smelled of death. In other words, Ezekiel noticed the brokenness among him in the valley. PGBC and the city of Portsmouth contain broken people. Death is all around the city and the church. There is a significant opioid and drug abuse epidemic. As Waters states about the conditions around the Black churches, "Depression appears on the faces of a somewhat hopeless people…Drugs is the byword."[71] This community has been traumatized by many events. Furman comments, "A person suffering from trauma will typically look for the closest and most available source of consolation."[72] Thus, the people within the church need ministry freshness to restore life. There is dryness in the city and the church. The text intersects with the brokenness of this ministry's context.

So, it is incumbent to address the leadership's brokenness and dryness and then the laity's and community's dryness. Seeing the negativity within the church and outside the community, God asks PGBC and Portsmouth can these bones live? That question is the same one God asks Ezekiel. We can respond together, Lord, you know. The answer to this question leads to the third essential uncovered by the text, which is the testimony and proclamation of the word. Ezekiel had to speak to the bones using the word of the Lord. The current PGBC's vision statement identifies the church's actions must be biblically based. There must be a connection to the word of the Lord. Without the word of the Lord, a restored life is not possible. To begin answering questions within the community and in the church, PGBC must emphasize the word of the Lord.

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[71] Waters, "Vultures," 95-96.

[72] Furman, "Trauma," 35.

The words “hear” in verse four and “commanded” in verses seven and ten respectfully exemplify the fourth textual discovery pertinent to the project’s development. The bones hear the prophet’s voice with the word of the Lord, and then the bones start to come together. The prophet heard the word of the Lord and did as commanded. In other words, listening, hearing, and doing as God commands are essential to revitalization. This project also was a listening and hearing tour guided by productive conversations. We must hear the people and listen to God to find impactful solutions to the city’s and church’s problems.

Another textual discovery is the process of unity. Ezekiel cites the separation of the bones because they came together when he prophesied to them. In other words, one goal of this revitalization project is to bring the church and the community together. There has been a separation that needs to come together. When Ezekiel saw the merging of bones, he observed the unity process in bringing life. The project does not unify the church. Rather, it was only a mechanism to start the process. As the bones merged, the text unearthed another seminal essential to this revitalization project: the Holy Spirit. Revitalization occurs only after receiving and allowing the Holy Spirit to do His work. At the beginning of the text, the Spirit is behind the scenes doing his work.

Nevertheless, the Lord’s Spirit comes to the forefront when it is time (by the end of this pericope). As stated earlier, verse ten suggests that the breath, the Holy Spirit, came into them. Allowance and willingness are requirements to receive the Spirit. The project explored one’s readiness for and to revitalization. Has leadership allowed the Spirit to do his work in them?

At this point, PGBC becomes a revitalized army for the Lord. As Ezekiel eloquently explained, this once-separated valley of bones can now stand for the Lord as his people. Despite this miraculous transformation, naysayers among the group could only speak about the dryness, hopelessness, and disconnection. This project explored one's readiness for revitalization and how the revitalization process can grow them. God tells Ezekiel to prophesy to the people that God opens and brings them out of their graves. That dialogue is relevant because one can be alive yet live in the grave with the dead. So, the Lord implemented a divine infusion and transported the people to a place of life. This project desires to build revitalized people into a vibrant, refreshed environment.[73]

In conclusion, the story of Ezekiel, God, and the dry bones is a powerful testament to how God can use a leader, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to transform the seemingly impossible into a potent force for good—the dry bones. This narrative, deeply rooted in faith, holds a profound message for PGBC. Just as Ezekiel's unwavering belief led to a dramatic transformation of the dry bones into a mighty army for God, the leaders of PGBC must also have faith for revitalization through transformational change to occur. This work turns the church into a mighty army for the master. Now, this academic research pivots towards a historical event supporting revitalization: the Azusa Revival. This small prayer meeting in Los Angeles, California, sparked a significant global Christian movement.

[73] Similarly, Biwul describes how Ezekiel's dry bones prophetic narrative can change the fortunes of any people, particularly in Africa. Biwul, "Resonating Ezekiel's Message," 6-9.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The previous chapter provided a biblical framework for PGBC's leadership revitalization that leads to transformational change. Ezekiel offered a ministry revitalization model that brought life to the people of Israel, which changed the dry bones into a mighty army of God. Like this prophet, PGBC and her leadership must be equipped to identify the changing demographic of the church congregation and surrounding community. After laying out this biblical foundation, this chapter describes how the Azusa Street Revival sets the historical foundation for this project design. The Azusa Street Revival lasted from 1906-1915 and was led by William Seymour, an African American man from Louisiana. This revival in Los Angeles has significant historical pertinence and ministerial relevance to the current state of PGBC. To show this historical pertinence and ministerial relevance, this chapter divides into the following sections listed below:

A. Historical Overview and Background: This section gives a summary of some of the events that precipitated the revival and what occurred.
B. Prayer: The Azusa Street Revival began with a prayer meeting. This prayer meeting transformed lives and illuminated the power of prayer.
C. Racial Unity: During the Azusa Street Revival, many ethnic and racial groups and nationalities participated. This section details how this diversity impacted the effectiveness of the revival.
D. Women in Ministry: Women were instrumental in the spread of the revival. This section profiles the women who influenced the spread of Pentecostalism.

E. Economically Disadvantaged: The Azusa Street Revival reached a unique socioeconomic group spread throughout Los Angeles and the world. During this revival, people were hurting economically and needed encouragement and support. This section explains how the Azusa Street Revival affected the economically disadvantaged.
F. Spiritual and Evangelistic Empowerment: Persons who left the Azusa Street Revival felt empowered to do ministry. This empowerment led to the establishment of different churches throughout the world. This section only features a few of those churches.
G. Conclusion and Summary: The reader then sees all relevant connections between the Azusa Street Revival and the revitalization and ministry freshness of the PGBC.

To summarize, this research shows the historical credibility of PGBC's ministry revitalization and freshness project through the lens of the Azusa Street Revival.

Historical Overview and Background

Events that led to the Azusa Street Revival

Several events led to the Azusa Street Revival. It merged the Slave, West African, and European Religions.[1] At its core, people were searching for something similar to what occurred in Acts 2 on Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came as a rushing mighty wind. There was a sense that the church needed revival, revitalization, and freshness.[2] The Holy Spirit needed to re-empower the people of God again, like on that day in the upper room.

[1] Denni B. Lacy, "Segregation and Spirituality: Rediscovered American Pentecostalism's Biracial Roots within Binary Traditions" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2020), 30-48.

[2] Mary Peninger, *Spirit-Empowered: Azusa Street Revisited* (Meadville, PA: Christian Faith Publishing, 2017), 11; Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., "Pentecostalism and Mission: From Azusa Street to the Ends of the Earth," *Missiology* 35, no. 1 (2007): 75-92.

One event occurred at the Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas, founded by Charles Parham in October of 1900, less than six years before the Azusa Street Revival.[3] Parham expected the enrolled students at this college to practice what the house churches did in Acts 2:42-47, where they sold or gave away all their property and sacrificed everything. Their focus would now be rigorous prayer and relentless study. Something miraculous happened within three months, on January 1, 1901.[4] The praying, fasting, and study created an atmosphere for the work of the Holy Spirit. Starting with Agnes Ozman, the students received the power of the Holy Spirit.[5] Although this school did not last for long afterward, a Pentecostal movement had started.[6]

Phineas Bresee, the organizer of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene, played a crucial role in the Azusa Street Revival. Pastor Bresee worked to uphold the doctrine of holiness that emerged from Methodism.[7] Holiness is a vital piece of the puzzle of the Azusa Street Revival and the development of the Pentecostal movement.[8]

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[3] Allan Anderson, "The Azusa Revival, and the Emergency of Pentecostal Missions in the Early Twentieth Century," *Transformation* 23, no. 2 (2006): 107-108; Lacy, "Segregation," 34-37.

[4] Barbara Cavaness, "Spiritual Chains: Women used of God," *Assemblies of God Heritage* 25, no. 4 (Winter 2005-2006), 26.

[5] Denzil R. Miller, *The Women of Azusa Street: Four Spirit-Anointed Leaders of the Azusa Street Revival* (Springfield, MO: AlA Publications, 2015), 5.

[6] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 12-13.

[7] Lacy, "Segregation," 31.

[8] Vinson Synan, "The Azusa Street Revival: Celebrating 100 Years," *Assemblies of God Heritage* 25, no. 4 (Winter 2005-2006): 6-11.

The Welsh Revival of 1904-1906, led by Evan Roberts, also influenced the Azusa Street Revival.[9] Like Parham's Bethel Bible College, the revival was not sparked by a powerful sermon from a man. Instead, Roberts participated in a prayer meeting in October 1904, during which God would use him in a mighty way. He encouraged people to repent and confess their faith in Christ, leading to an instant surge in the revival in Wales. Prayer remained the source of power, creating unity among the people. The Welsh Revival lasted only two years. This revival connects to 312 Azusa Street through Frank Bartleman. Bartleman left Wales, traveled to Los Angeles, California, and brought with him his revival experience. He became a key source of information regarding everything that transpired at the Azusa Street Revival.[10]

The fourth major event that contributed to the Azusa Street Revival was the ministry of Joseph Smale. Pastor Smale was born in England and graduated from Charles Spurgeon's Pastor College, which trained and developed pastors in that country. Instead of staying in England, he became a Baptist pastor in Los Angeles in 1898. Eventually, his health issues prompted his return to his home country. Upon returning to Wales, the Welsh Revival inspired him as well, and brought that experience back to Los Angeles.[11] However, when he returned to the United States, he encountered opposition as his church rejected the emphasis on speaking in tongues and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This

[9] Jennifer A. Miskov, "The Welsh Revival and the Azusa Revival: Liturgical Connection, Similarities, and Development," in *Scripting Pentecost: A Study of Pentecostal, Worship, and Liturgy*, eds. Mark J. Certledge and A. J. Swoboda (New York, NY: Routledge Publishing, 2016): 32-53; Geoff Waugh, *Flashpoints of Revival* (Brisbane, AUS: Renewal Journal Publications, 2020), 50-57.

[10] Edith Blumhofer, "Azusa Street." *The Christian Century* 123, no. 5 (2006): 20-22.

[11] Miskov, "The Welsh," 35-38.

pressure led him to resign. After his resignation, many members of the church chose to follow him, and he organized a new congregation called the New Testament Church.[12]

After the Bethel Bible College, Parham started a school in Houston, Texas called the Apostolic Faith Bible School, the sixth critical event, which led to the Azusa Street Revival.[13] Like his other school, students received the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the Apostolic Faith Bible School. Lucy Farrow, the housekeeper of Charles Parham, was one of those people. Unbeknownst to her, Mrs. Farrow would play a vital role in the Azusa Street Revival. In her excitement at what transpired in her life, Farrow convinced William Seymour to apply to this school, and Minister Parham accepted his enrollment.[14]

William Seymour

The life journey of William Seymour was the seventh part of the puzzle that helped fuel the Azusa Street Revival. At least three important things to the Azusa Street Revival are a direct result of Rev. Seymour's life story. As the revival's leader, his story proves pivotal to understanding the revival. First, it was Parham who taught him principles that would be essential to Pentecostalism. At the Apostolic Faith Bible School, Seymour learned about some of the tenets of the Pentecostal movement, such as baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. According to Parham, these two things were evidence of the inward change of Christians.[15]

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[12] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 15-17.

[13] Synan, "Celebrating 100," 6.

[14] Cavaness, "Spiritual Chain," 27-28; Miller, "The Women," 11-12.

[15] Darrin Rodgers, "The Place of Azusa Street in Pentecostal Origins," *Assemblies of God Heritage* 25, no. 4 (Winter 2005-2006): 3.

The second instance in Seymour's life relevant to the revival is Seymour's rearing as an African American in the postbellum South. In other words, his parents, Simon and Phillis Seymour, were now former slaves due to the North's victory in the Civil War.[16] Reconstruction had just begun. Like many African Americans during that time, Seymour faced racism and segregation that prevented him from accessing opportunities. The law of the land at the time was "separate but equal."[17] Besides reduced opportunities as a Black man, his health created an additional obstacle. He contracted smallpox as a child, which caused him to be blind in his left eye and deformed a portion of his face. When he enrolled in Parham's school, Rev. Seymour was not allowed in the classroom where Parham taught because he was a Black man.[18]

The shaping of Seymour's spiritual portion of his journey was the third personal component pertinent to the Azusa Revival, as the movement has a connection with African American religious tradition and the holiness tradition of Methodism.[19] Seymour was a Black Louisiana preacher with a varied religious background. This varied religious background caused him to have an ecumenical approach to Christianity. He grew up in the Baptist church. Later, he became a part of the Methodist tradition in Indiana and then joined the Holiness church in Ohio. He remained with the Holiness church when he

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[16] Gary B. McGee, "William J. Seymour and the Azusa Street Revival," Assemblies of God (USA), https://news.ag.org/en/article-repository/news/1999/04/william-j-seymour-and-the-azusa-street-revival.

[17] Lacy, "Segregation," 17-29.

[18] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 18-19.

[19] Rodgers, "The Place," 3-5.

moved to Texas. In the Lone Star state, a momentous event occurred in Seymour's life when he became a student of Charles Parham.

The Start of the Azusa Street Revival

In January 1906, Pastor Julia Hutchins asked Seymour to speak at the Los Angeles Santa Fe Street Holiness Mission.[20] Upon arriving in February of 1906, Hutchins intended for him to serve as the pastor.[21] His relocation changed him and helped to start a movement that is one of the most significant segments of Christianity.[22]

When he got to Hutchins' church, Seymour preached and taught from a perspective that conflicted with the mission's viewpoint. That perspective was speaking in tongues and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. As a result, the mission locked him out of the building.[23] Seymour had to go back home or stay in California, now with no position at the mission. He already suffered alienation as a blind Black man with no money, and he now lacked employment to care for himself. However, God did something interesting at this point. A couple, Mr., and Mrs. Edward Lee, who were from the same church that locked him out, decided to give him room and board at no charge. Although Seymour had no access to Sante Fe Street Mission, not every church member opposed his instruction.

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[20] Miller, "*The Women of Azusa Street*," 9-10.

[21] Mookgo Solomon Kgatla, "The Influence of Azusa Street Revival in the Early Developments of the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa," *Missionalia* 41, no. 3 (2016): 323, https://doi.org/10.31380/2573-6345.1244.

[22] Scholars argue on how much credence to give the Azusa Revival in the spreading of Pentecostalism. Robeck, "Pentecostalism," 75-92.

[23] Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., *The Azusa St. Mission and Revival* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishing, 2006), 62-64.

For that reason, the supporters came to Lees's home and decided to do as Charles Parham's students, Evan Robert's members, and those disciples who were in the upper room did. They prayed.

These prayer meetings began at 216 Bonnie Brae Street, the home of Richard and Ruth Asberry.[24] This street was nestled within the Black community, which had a variety of Christian traditions among the residents. There were Baptist, Methodist, and Holiness churches represented.[25] In this community of varied forms of Christianity, Seymour, the Lees, the Asberrys, and other supporters prayed consistently and persistently for several days. Like in Acts 2, the Holy Spirit did a miraculous work at the prayer meeting on April 9, 1906. The Holy Spirit filled the people who were there. One woman, Jennie Moore, who later became Seymour's wife, started to play the piano without any classical musical training. She was the first woman to speak in tongues there.[26]

When the people heard about the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit at the meeting, so many people came to Bonnie Brae Street that the Asberry's porch collapsed. Seymour had to find a new location for this prayer meeting, and he did at 312 Azusa Street, Los Angeles, California.[27] This building, formerly the Stevens African Methodist Episcopal Church, was abandoned.[28] Energy was so high among the people that when an arsonist destroyed the building, volunteers helped to fix the damage that had been done.

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[24] Keri L. Day, "The Politics of Azusa: Transforming Citizenship at the Margins," *Political Theology* 22, no. 7 (2021): 611-626. https://doi.org/10.1080/1462317X.2021.1941651.

[25] Synan, "Celebrating 100," 7.

[26] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 21-22.

[27] Anderson, "The Azusa Revival," 109-116.

[28] Synan, "Celebrating 100," 8.

The Holy Spirit transformed a localized endeavor into a global movement.[29] This forty feet by forty feet street building housed almost 1,500 people during the peak of Azusa.[30]

"Participants in the Azusa Street Revival dealt daily in the miraculous."[31] Each day of the revival, with three services (morning, afternoon, and night), exhibited specific characteristics.[32] There was not a prescribed order of worship. The goal was to give the Holy Spirit the freedom to do the work. Services included singing, praying, testimony, worship, and a cappella singing.[33] Like the Welsh Revival and the Bethel experience, prayer was a foundation for the services. It was their distinct belief that prayer would change things. The sick could be healed; the unsaved could receive salvation; Christians could be baptized in the Spirit. "The Mission's basic beliefs were (1) salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, (2) sanctification (holiness) of the believer, (3) speaking in tongues as the evidence of the Holy Spirit's baptism, (4) healing, and (5) the impending return of Jesus Christ."[34]

To spread the news of the Holy Spirit's miraculous work and share printed copies of Seymour's sermons, Seymour started a newspaper called The Apostolic Faith.[35] The

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[29] Edith Blumhofer, "Revisiting Azusa Street: A Centennial Retrospect," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 30, no. 2 (2006): 60.

[30] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 20-23.

[31] Blumhofer, "Revisiting Azusa Street," 59.

[32] Synan, "Celebrating 100," 8-9; Michael J. McClymond, ed., "Azusa Street Commentary and Excerpts," *Christian History Institute*, 2024, https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/ch153-Azusa-commentary.

[33] Synan, "Celebrating 100," 8-9.

[34] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 24.

[35] Blumhofer, "Revisiting Azusa Street," 60-61.

Apostolic Faith eventually circulated worldwide. At Azusa, Pastor Seymour explained in a sermon how one would receive the baptism of the Spirit.[36] First, one receives salvation or justification, the first act of grace. Then one gains the second act of grace, sanctification, through the power of the blood of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. In other words, receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit requires Christians to sacrifice everything for Christ, like when a man forsakes everything for his wife and cleaves to her. Christians become attached to Christ by the Spirit.[37]

The goal of Azusa was to reach the world with the biblical message through preaching, teaching, and evangelism.[38] "Azusa [attempted] to reclaim Christian apocalyptic language. The congregants believed that the Azusa Street Revival was an 'end times' revival in which they are inaugurating the coming of Jesus."[39] Missionaries were being sent into the world with their urgent message. Six months after the Holy Spirit's presence at Azusa, over thirty missionaries left this revival to take this message to the world. Its reach extended to more than forty nations in less than three years. Of note, in the first year of the Azusa, over fifteen first-time missionaries went to foreign nations. Half of them were African Americans. This majority would correctly suggest that African Americans led this revival. Azusa was leaving an impression on the missional field. Some veteran missionaries who came to Azusa were baptized with the Holy Spirit. This

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[36] William Seymour and Larry E. Martin, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit," in *The Words that Changed the World: Azusa Street Sermons* (Joplin, MO: Christian Life Books, 2000), 48-51.

[37] Seymour, "The Words," 62.

[38] J. Stephen Jester, "Azusa Street Redux: Renewal for Twenty-First Century Pentecostal Missiology." in *Pentecostal* (Portland, OR: Society of for Pentecostal Studies, 2019): 5.

[39] Day, "The Politics," 614.

experience led them to become Azusa Street missionaries. Such an experience happened to Antoinette Moomau, a Presbyterian mission worker, and Bernt Bernsten, an independent Chinese missionary.[40]

The people were doing the Lord's work and were baptized in the Spirit at Azusa Street. Azusa's leaders, including Seymour, were willing to build collaborative relationships with other missions yet to come to Azusa Street. For example, Pastors William Durham of the North Avenue Mission Chicago, Illinois, and Martin Ryan, of the Twelfth Street Pentecostal Mission visited Azusa Street themselves and built a relationship with leaders and the church who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit but not from Azusa Street, such as Andrew Urshan, an Iranian immigrant and Luigi Francescon, a Waldensians immigrant. Both Urshan and Francescon built churches. Urshan established a Persian church in Chicago, and Francescon organized an Italian Pentecostal denomination in the United States of America.[41] Every person needs to practice individual and communal holy living. Christian holiness requires repentance and faith in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit's baptism. This same message applies to every person on Earth. Azusa was an eyewitness to what the Holy Spirit can do in someone's life and how the Holy Spirit can use His people to impact others.[42]

The Azusa Street Revival ended because of marriage drama, community disunity, a blazing fire, market cannibalization, and the sudden death of Pastor Seymour. When William Seymour married Jennie in May 1908, people left the Mission, including Lucy

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[40] Anderson, "The Azusa Street Revival," 112-116; Robeck, "Pentecostalism," 80-84.

[41] Robeck, "Pentecostalism," 84-86.

[42] Robeck, "Pentecostalism," 75-92.

Farrow and Florence Crawford. These two women organized a competing mission in the northwest.[43] For that very same reason, Clara Lum took the list of national and international contacts for the Apostolic Faith and organized another mission.[44] Even with Pastor Seymour's help, Azusa could maintain unity for only so long, as who had the power and control became a paramount concern. Eventually, like Farrow and Crawford, others created additional competing missions to compete with Azusa.

In 1922, Pastor Seymour died of a sudden heart attack. His wife, Jennie, became the pastor and attempted to continue the energy he started, her efforts failed. Eventually, the building on Azusa Street experienced a fire, and the city destroyed it in 1931.[45] Although the city tore down the building on Azusa, the spiritual fire that Seymour and his multicultural team of believers started has remained a blazing inferno today.

The Pentecostal movement has spread throughout America and the world.[46] The Pentecostal movement is currently one of the largest Christian groups in America. This renewal brought unity among racial and ethnic groups. Some common beliefs within this movement are the Holy Spirit's baptism, speaking in tongues, and personal holiness. According to Pentecostalism, the church has the authority to do ministry through the Holy Spirit's empowerment. What makes reaching the world vital is that the world will soon end. There is no time to wait to do the work. The occasion at Azusa proves that revitalization is necessary for progress.

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[43] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 41.

[44] Dale T. Irwin, "Drawing All Together in One Bond of Love': The Ecumenical Vision of William Seymour and the Azusa Revival," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 3, no. 6 (1995): 32.

[45] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 41; Robeck, "Uncovering," 15; Synan, "Celebrating 100 Years," 11.

[46] Blumhofer, "Revisiting Azusa Street," 60-64.

The Impact of Azusa Street Revival

Impact #One: Prayer

This revival, a pivotal event of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, highlighted the historical and transformative power of prayer, offering a profound connection to the divine. Prayer, a central element in revivals such as the Welsh Revival (1904-1905) and the Azusa Street Revival (1906-1909), sparked worship services. Leaders like Bartleman, during various revivals, demonstrated how prayer could ignite spiritual fervor. The practice of praying and waiting for God to act, reminiscent of the events at Pentecost, was frequently emphasized. Authentic communication with the divine through prayer assured that God would respond to the concerns of His people and ultimately intervene. The significance of maintaining faith was illustrated at Azusa Street, as shown by William Seymour's unwavering commitment despite the prospect of leaving Los Angeles. Prayer was a vital component of the entire liturgy, reflecting the earnestness of the Azusa Street Revival community. William Seymour and others at Azusa Street remained steadfast in prayer, underscoring the importance of faithfulness to prayer for the people of God. This dedication to prayer fostered a deep intimacy with God, inviting the audience to enhance their spiritual connections.

Miskov's emphasis on the inseparable link between revivals and prayer, with worship always preceding any revival, highlights the role of prayer in fostering a relationship with God. For transformational change to take root, prayer must be central to God's people. A loss of focus on prayer and the failure to seek the guidance and empowerment of God's Holy Spirit can hinder belief and growth. As a form of

confession, prayer illuminates the humility of imperfect human beings communicating with a perfect, holy God. The significance of prayer in preaching and its role in unleashing the power of God's Spirit—a force that can drive spiritual growth—invokes a sense of spiritual connection in the audience.[47]

At the Azusa Street Revival, prayer was not just a routine practice but a vital force. People used prayer clothes as aids for divine healing. This practice, for which William Seymour could provide theological explanations, underscored the crucial role of remaining faithful to prayer. It was not just about deliverance, healing, salvation, and the Christian walk but about the transformational change that could only occur through the power of prayer. This emphasis on the urgency and necessity of prayer invoked a sense of commitment and dedication in the audience, stressing the transformative power of prayer.[48]

Historian Amy Sitar posits that the Apostolic Faith, the newspaper of the Azusa Street Revival, highlights two significant prayer practices. One of these practices involves praying for the Spirit, signifying believers' plea for the Holy Spirit to indwell within them. This practice necessitates patience, echoing the instruction in Acts 1 that disciples should await empowerment from above before making any moves. Waiting upon the Lord is a recurring theme in the biblical text. Patience fosters purity. Isaiah 40:31 states that the Lord will renew our strength when we wait on him. The Apostolic Faith actively promoted purity during the Azusa Street Revival. In 1 John 1, the Holy Bible proclaims for us to walk in the light as he is in the light. Praying for the Spirit also

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[47] Miskov, "The Welsh," 32-52.

[48] Gregory Kane, "Anointed Prayer Handkerchiefs: Are we Missing a Paradigm for Healing?," *Journal of the European Pentecostal Association* 32, no. 1 (2012): 77-81.

leads to humility, as purity is unattainable without the Lord. The newspaper encouraged people to embody both purity and patience. The gatherings at the Azusa were comprised of humble individuals in an unassuming location, all longing for the presence of the Lord. Through praying for the Spirit, believers at the Azusa Street Revival sought divine intervention in every circumstance.[49]

The Christians at the Azusa Street Revival offered prayers for both the physical and spiritual body. The prayers for physical ailments were focused on emulating Jesus' example of healing the sick during his time on earth. Alongside physical healing, there were prayers for spiritual restoration aimed at reconnecting individuals with God. The basis for these prayers was firmly rooted in biblical teachings, as the attendees of the Azusa Street Revival strongly believed in the healing power of Jesus as described in the Bible. Central to these healing practices was the necessity of faith. Similar to the accounts of healing in the Bible, individuals seeking healing at the Azusa Street Revival were required to demonstrate unwavering faith. Reports from the Apostolic Faith highlighted individuals like Margaret Gill, whose healing was attributed to her strong faith. Obedience was also seen as a natural outcome of this faith, as prayer was viewed as a means of communicating with God, which required obedience to His teachings. According to the Apostolic News, obedience was closely linked to healing, with healing being contingent on obedience. It was emphasized that obedience manifested faith in God, and those who had faith would obediently follow God's guidance. Moreover, praying for physical healing was spiritual through tangible methods, such as using

[49] Amy Sitar, "Prayer for Power: Disposition and Discipline in the Azusa Street Revival's Apostolic Faith," *Poetics* 30, no. 5-6 (2008): 450-456.

handkerchiefs. Additionally, individuals were encouraged to share testimonies of God's healing power as a result of these prayers for physical well-being.[50]

Stewart chronicled the inspiring beginnings of the Azusa Street Revival, emphasizing how the prayer gatherings ignited a remarkable move of God. Under the leadership of William Seymour, a small group gathered at Edward and Mattie Lee's home. Their commitment soon propelled the movement to 214 North Bonnie Brae Street and then to 312 Azusa Street, where it thrived. This captivating account serves as a reminder that transformative prayer can start with just a few devoted individuals. One poignant moment occurred when Seymour fervently prayed for the healing of his friend, Edward Lee.[51]

Kgatla discussed how this prayer movement extended to places such as South Africa. Inspired by his experience at Azusa Street, John G. Lake played a pivotal role in its introduction to that country. Through his divine healing ministry, Lake conducted impactful prayers, laying hands on the sick who subsequently experienced recovery. Furthermore, Lake sought divine inspiration for his literary works, which ultimately sparked transformation in others. His dedication inspired individuals like Elias Letwaba to pursue divine healing through prayer.[52]

According to Irwin, during the zenith of the Azusa Street Revival, prayer took on a new dimension, with prayers for Pentecost to permeate the entire body of the Church. The participants were not just hopeful but also expectant that the baptism of the Holy

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[50] Sitar, "Prayer for Power," 456-458.

[51] Adam Stewart, "Azusa Street Mission and Revival," In *Handbook of Pentecostal Christianity*, ed. Adam S. Stewart (NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 43-48, https://doi.org/10.1515/ 978150 1757105-008.

[52] Kgatla, "The Influence," 321-335.

Spirit would bring unity to the global Christian Church. The influence of Pentecostalism extended beyond the revival, reaching other Christian denominations and leading to the establishment of prayer gatherings. These gatherings, featuring altar call prayers and spaces reminiscent of the upper room in Acts chapter one, stood as a testament to the power of prayer in fostering unity. Their earnest prayers prompted God to respond with the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues, as described in Acts chapter two. Importantly, individuals of different races prayed together, creating a strong sense of community and inclusion and underscoring the unifying power of prayer. The establishment of these prayer gatherings, which continue to this day, showcases the lasting impact of the Azusa Street Revival and the transformative power of prayer.[53]

Upon witnessing the impact of the Azusa Street Revival, it is evident that significant change within a community can be brought about by the dedicated efforts of a small group of individuals who wholeheartedly believe in the transformative power of God. Their unwavering faith in God's ability to mend hearts and restore the well-being of the afflicted, both physically and spiritually, is the driving force behind this change. To initiate transformation at PGBC, commencing with persistent and unwavering prayer is essential. One must patiently anticipate the intervention of God through the Holy Spirit. It is worth reflecting on whether our prayers have been earnest and sincere. The involvement of God is indispensable for the desired transformation at PGBC, and this is precisely what the community needs.

[53] Irwin, “Drawing,” 25-53.

Impact #Two: Racial Unity

Racial unity was one fundamental impact during and after the Azusa Street Revival. Each person there received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which signifies union with God through the Holy Spirit. This union meant that there was no racial division. In other words, it was the mark and conduit for erasing the separation between those of a different race, nationality, or ethnic group. William Seymour's value for those of different races may have been lost.[54] Seymour stressing unity in the bond of love was far different from his white teacher, Charles Parham. He saw the correlation between the work of the Spirit and unity among those who look different than him.[55]

Because Portsmouth, Ohio is a multicultural environment, PGBC must operate as a racially unified church. Historically speaking, Portsmouth was one of the major cities on the Underground Railroad. The city, particularly PGBC, played a major role in Ohio's portion of the Civil Rights Movement. In other words, PGBC must continue to bring people together racially.

Jesus Christ's commitment to humanity, resulting in his blood sacrifice, broke the walls between any group. Since the same Holy Spirit baptizes every race, creed, culture, nationality, and language with the same Holy Spirit, everyone is on equal footing.[56] No one is above or beneath another. At Azusa, people of all races worshipped and served liberally. It was profound that people of different races were next to each other during the

[54] Irwin, "Drawing," 27.

[55] Irwin, "Drawing," 29-30.

[56] Seymour, "The Words," 50; Rodgers, "From the Editor," 2.

service.[57] "There [is] unity in spirit, unity in purpose, and unity in fellowship."[58] Considering there was segregation in the early 20th century and the United States had recently fought the Civil War over slavery, this interaction would have seemed impossible, but it did occur.[59] At the revival's peak, the Apostolic Faith's newsletter had two white women, Florence Crawford and Clara Lum, as the editors.[60]

For the church to prosper, it must have this same commitment. Jesus' prayer in the highly priestly prayer is for the church to be as one, just as Jesus and His Father are one. Disunity is what has caused conflict within the church. For this reason, leaders within the church must remain razor-focused to avoid division and be unified in Christ Jesus.

The Azusa Street participants challenged the American political structure and ideas of citizenship.[61] What occurred at Azusa suggests a new framework of democracy and who are considered citizens of this country. White supremacy had been deeply ingrained in America and created racial division. Seymour's experiment in this environment proves that unity is possible because he pastored people of different races. His leadership team also contained different races. Their practices as a community signaled to the rest of America that Azusa resisted the oppressive, racist culture. A

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[57] Synan, "Celebrating 100," 9.

[58] Jester, "Azusa," 9-10.

[59] Lacy, "Segregation," 10-13; Marvin McMickle, "The Present Day Power of Pentecost: The Rise and Growth of Black Pentecostalism in America," *The Living Pulpit* 37 (2004): 30.

[60] Synan, "Celebrating 100," 10.

[61] Irwin G. Chetty, "Pentecostals and Socio-political Engagement: An Overview from Azusa Street to the New Kairos Movement," *Journal of Theology for South Africa* 143 (2012): 23-47.

community should be able to live together and not be divided. The Azusa community's ability to live together testifies to the people's character.[62] These racial issues separated Parham from Seymour. Parham believed in separate but equal, while Seymour believed in unity and no separation. What that means for the church is that they must speak for the least, the lost, and the left out. There are some people who have been left behind. The leadership and congregants must strive to help those people that have been mistreated, always challenging the political system to do what is right. In other words, the church should be the beacon of light to prove that people can be unified. Azusa did not change any laws, but the Azusa participants showed the flaws in American democracy by living in a unified manner that went against the social norms of the time. Azusa was not a place of politicians, but it did have a political underpinning because it upset political structures.[63]

Even today, interracial unity remains a biblical mark of the Christian community that the Holy Spirit fosters through baptism. By engaging in prayer at this meeting, the attendees demonstrated humility and self-sacrifice. Blythe noted that they were gathered in unity, displaying love for one another.[64] It did not matter what race, nationality, or culture individuals belonged to. Similar to the scene from Isaiah chapter six, the Lord filled this environment so profoundly that Seymour delivered a sermon titled "The Apostolic Faith," focusing on being the Christian community of all nations, races, and cultures.

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[62] Day, "The Politics," 611-626.

[63] Day, "The Politics," 611-626.

[64] Michael Blythe, "Azusa Street and the Lost Doctrine of Humility," *Spiritus* 7, no. 1 (2022): 97-117, https://doi.org/10.31380/2573-6345.1244.

The closer PGBC resembles the kingdom of God, the more it resembles a multicultural church consisting of people of different nationalities, creeds, and cultures. Plus, becoming more multicultural is the only way the church can bring light to this generation and this city without losing its historic African American roots.

Holiness is impossible when there is disunity because love and service cause God's people to come together.[65] Disunity originates in sin. Sin gives more credence to manufactured creeds and denominational documents than the Word of God and the Spirit. The Spirit is the authority in the church. If he is not, confusion, chaos, and division occur.[66] PGBC, this means that as the church grows in holiness, it becomes increasingly accepting and welcoming of racially diverse individuals.

Impact #Three: Women in Ministry

During the revival, Seymour promoted and affirmed the work of women in ministry. This affirmation was before the women's suffrage movement pushed Congress to enact the nineteenth Amendment in 1919, giving women the right to vote.[67] For Seymour, men, particularly their fathers, no longer controlled women.[68] His promotion of women's equality came out of his seeing racial solidarity.[69] A man is not more important than a woman. In many instances, they could function effectively in the same roles in the

[65] Irwin, "Drawing," 32.

[66] Irwin, "Drawing," 36.

[67] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 23.

[68] Seymour, "The Word," 32.

[69] Irwin, "Drawing," 30-31.

ministry. Unlike the established Christian traditions, Azusa overcame gender restrictions. With the lifting of these restrictions, women left Baptist and Methodist traditions. At Azusa, women preachers, teachers, and pastors could operate fully in their gifting.[70]

PGBC is a Baptist church with a Methodist background. Its original members were from an African Methodist church, Allen AME Church, which was founded in 1864. For that reason, the church understands the struggle of women in ministry and how powerful women have faced obstacles in finding their voice and being affirmed by others. In this struggle, PGBC is connected to the Azusa Street Revival. At PGBC, women function in several roles, such as trustee, minister, prayer warrior, and more.

Women functioned in several ministerial roles at the Azusa. Sister Dundee prayed over little Robert Montgomery, and the Holy Spirit healed him.[71] Jennie Moore, a piano player at the revival, married William Seymour. She even became pastor of Seymour's church after her husband's sudden death.[72] Emma Cotton, another participant on Azusa Street, had the gift of healing. She partnered with her husband to start the Crouch Memorial Church in California.[73] Julia Hutchins, the person who asked Seymour to come to the West Coast initially, also became a part of the movement, and she helped spread the message of Azusa Street to Africa.[74] Some women were prolific writers and editors who helped move forward the Azusa St. movement. Florence Crawford assisted

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[70] Day, "The Politics of Azusa," 613.

[71] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 31.

[72] Miller, "The Women of Azusa Street," 15-16; Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 37.

[73] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 37.

[74] Miller, "The Women of Azusa Street," 9-10; Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 37-38.

Seymour in writing and editing the Apostolic Faith, the newspaper of the Azusa Street Revival.[75]

Like the apostle Paul and the other eleven disciples who took missionary trips throughout Europe, women also participated in evangelism. Lucy Farrow, who introduced Seymour to Parham, traveled to Liberia and served as an evangelist. In addition to Africa, Farrow preached in several states, including Texas, New York, and Virginia.[76] Anna Hall preached to and taught native Russians in their native tongues.[77] Rosa Harmon, Molly McCauley, and Molly's husband, Edward, went to Liberia and built a mission there.[78] Mae Field Mayo served at the Peniel Mission by ministering to Chinese-speaking Americans for several years.[79] Elizabeth Sission was a missionary in India. Also, she did ministry in the Northeast section of the United States of America and became editor of an Apostolic publication called *Triumph of Faith.*[80]

Other women evangelists did their evangelistic work in the United States of America. Rachel Sizelove brought the message of Pentecostalism to Missouri. She was a free Methodist evangelist before receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit.[81] Ivey Campbell was multitalented as a tailor and the evangelist who brought Pentecostalism to

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[75] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 37-38.

[76] Blumhofer, "Revisiting Azusa Street," 60; Miller, "The Women," 11-13.

[77] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 37-38.

[78] Robeck "Pentecostalism," 86.

[79] "Peniel Missions," *Peniel Herald* 8, no. 6 (June 1902): 3; Robeck, "Pentecostalism," 87.

[80] Cavaness, "Spiritual Chain," 25.

[81] Miller, "The Women," 17-20; Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 38-39.

Ohio.[82] Carrie Judd Montgomery had a healing, teaching, and administration ministry. She received ordination from the white version of the Church of God in Christ and the Assemblies of God.[83]

These women fulfilled what was stated in Joel 2:28-32 and Acts 2:17-19, where the daughters (women) would prophesy, and handmaidens (women) would receive the pouring of the Holy Spirit. The Azusa Revival placed women on an equal playing field as men. Revitalization in PGBC only occurs with the involvement of women in numerous roles. Since most of the population of Portsmouth, Ohio is women, it is paramount that the PGBC reach the women of the city.

Impact #Four: Economically Disadvantaged

"The men and women who labored at Azusa were not powerful, wealthy, or educated people of their day."[84] Many of those they ministered to belonged to the same economic class. The least, the lost, and the left out were a priority in the ministerial efforts of the Azusa Street Revival. Seymour's sermon titled "Rivers of Living Water" explains how God meets our needs.[85] The Lord is the living water that never runs dry, even when mankind's well runs empty. Those who are broken can find healing in the Lord.

This type of economic hardship connects with Portsmouth, Ohio. Portsmouth is not a thriving economic center, and much of the population is poor. So, PGBC must not

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[82] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 37-38.

[83] Cavaness, "Spiritual Chain," 24-25.

[84] Peninger, "Spirit-Empowered," 39.

[85] Seymour, "The Words," 29-33.

forget the people who are struggling. Jesus says that there would always be poor among us. The revitalization of PGBC involves bringing life to the community. This empowerment of the community starts with spiritual disciplines, such as fasting, prayer, study, love, and patience.

According to Dr. Dennis Lacy, the hardships faced by the people, particularly economic struggles, were a driving force behind the Azusa Street Revival.[86] People were hurting and in need of relief. Those who attended the Revival found hope despite their circumstances. In fact, during the services, money was generously distributed to those experiencing poverty, following the practice outlined in Acts 2:42-47.[87] The filling of the well represented not only an external impact but also an internal fulfillment of salvation in the heart through the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, ministry begins with meeting people where they are. This should be the focus of the revitalization efforts at PGBC. A change in approach is necessary to bring life to the community.

To receive the baptism of the Spirit, one must be lowly and humble in spirit. Living this sanctified life shows one's sacrifice to do without and one's compassion for those lacking life's necessities. The Azusa leadership even debated whether to charge a fee for the newsletter since many readers could not afford to buy it. In other words, charging any price would create a division between the haves and the have-nots. Therefore, the Mission church at Azusa technically had no fee for the Apostolic Faith newsletter. The blessing was that they would receive donations to keep the newsletter

[86] Lacy, "Segregation," 4-7.

[87] Synan, "Celebrating 100," 8.

running, and exploiting the people, whether rich or poor, was not an option. They simply believed that God would provide.[88]

Rodgers paints a typical Pentecostal as a poor woman living in a developing country.[89] In other words, Pentecostal churches after Azusa Street must continue to reach out to the economically disadvantaged. Likewise, PGBC cannot forget those who are suffering. Revitalization is spiritual, economic, mental, and emotional.

Impact #Five: Spiritual and Evangelistic Empowerment

People left the Azusa Revival spiritually empowered and encouraged. Cecil Robeck, a scholar of Pentecostal theology and history, acknowledges that the attendance at the Azusa Street Revival was impressive.[90] The participants sought to engage in ministry. Following the Azusa Street experience, some even established individual churches or groups of churches. As the Gospels state about Jesus, no book can fully capture the effects of the Holy Spirit during the Azusa Revival. Nonetheless, there are certain common characteristics of this spiritual and evangelistic empowerment. Each church organization recognizes the significance of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church. There must be space for the work of the Comforter, and that work is precisely

[88] Day, "The Politics," 621.

[89] Darrin Rodgers, "From the Editor," 5.

[90] Robeck," Pentecostalism," 77-92.

what the participants of Azusa engaged in. Another Baptist, Charles Harrison Mason, attended the Azusa Street Revival, received the Holy Spirit, and spoke in tongues.[91] Upon returning from this spiritual experience, many churches in Mississippi rejected what happened to him, but he remained undeterred. He went on to establish the Church of God in Christ.[92]

While addressing the economic aspect of revitalization, PGBC must not overlook the spiritual element as well. Revitalization occurs through the power and aid of the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit, there is no power or life. That power and life should extend beyond one's own existence. The participants of Azusa had the courage to go to the farthest reaches of the planet to share God's message with the people. One notable example is John G. Lake and Thomas Hezmalach, who took the message from Azusa Street to South Africa.[93] Their influence fostered unity and nonracialism in a segregated nation. The Azusa Street Revival inspired Juan Lugo to establish over thirty churches in Puerto Rico. In his ministry in Puerto Rico, he fought against racism.[94] Romanita Carbajal inspired other Hispanic individuals in Mexico, demonstrating how women also played a significant role in the movement.[95]

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[91] The Azusa Street Revival significantly impacted individuals from the Baptist tradition. Notable figures, such as William Seymour, Joseph Smale, and Charles Harrison Mason originally identified themselves as Baptist. Another example is Ansel Post, who had a transformative encounter with the Holy Spirit, receiving God's perfect love. As a result of this experience, Post became an Azusa missionary to Egypt. Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street* (South Plainfield, NJ: Bridge Publishing, 1980), 61.

[92] Katherine Burgess, "Bishop Mason Built COGIC out of Revival, the Faith of Former Slaves," Memphis Commercial Appeal, https://www.commericialappeal. com /story/news/2019/09/ 10/church-god-christ-bishop-mason-built-cogic/2220079001.

[93] Anderson, "The Azusa Revival," 111; Kgatla, "The Influence," 321-335.

[94] Carmelo Alvarez, "Hispanic Pentecostals: Azusa and Beyond," *Encounter* 63, no. 1 (Winter 2002): 18-20.

[95] Alvarez, "Hispanic Pentecostals," 21-26.

In the same vein, PGBC's revitalization effort involves going beyond itself and reaching the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Social media and other methods of reaching the world must be promoted. Like anything else, these tools only work with the direction of the Holy Spirit. For PGBC to renew, the church must be intentionally bold in the work of the Lord.

Boldness can wane at any moment if one becomes disheartened by a situation, but the people of Azusa remained relentlessly faithful. Charles Mason persevered until his death.[96] Despite the division at the revival's conclusion, Seymour continued to spread his message. After his passing, Jennie carried on Seymour's work. Although the Mission faltered under her leadership, one cannot say she gave up. Blumhofer captures the spiritual and evangelistic empowerment that emerged from the Azusa Revival by stating:

> Azusa Street is important to the larger story of contemporary world Christianity as one of the series of revivals at the dawn of the twentieth century that emphasized the Holy Spirit and inclined people in widely scattered local settings to pursue a more intense Spirit-driven piety…Azusa Street reveals a surge of interest in the work of the Holy Spirit.[97]

PGBC must acknowledge and submit to the work of the Holy Spirit. By surrendering, God guides the church in bringing freshness to ministry and to the city of Portsmouth. It is not easy, but the PGBC must increase its efforts to do the Lord's destined work.

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[96] McMickle, "The Present," 29-30.

[97] Blumhofer, "Revisiting," 61.

Conclusion

Historically speaking, the Azusa Street Revival changed the trajectory of a body of believers. The Azusa Street Revival has several takeaways directly connected to PGBC. The first takeaway is the spiritual journey of the leaders. What makes a revival, revitalization, and restoration is just as much about the Lord and the other people as it is about the one who leads it. The driving force behind the Revival was a person who experienced racial oppression and segregation and after receiving training from Charles Parham, came to California. The revival began with Seymour as a person before the Azusa Street Revival started at Bonnie Brae. It started when he decided to leave his racist circumstances in Louisiana, go to the Midwest, and then Texas, where Parham taught him. For that reason, PGBC receives the blessing of revitalization, renewal, and revival only when the leadership beyond just the pastor opens themselves up to it. This acceptance involves word, thought, and deed.

The second takeaway is that the Azusa Street Revival demonstrated the power of prayer. This revival started with a prayer meeting, which transformed lives throughout the world. PGBC's revitalization through transformational change begins with a prayer meeting, so we must be sincere in our time with the Lord and watch what God can do.

The third takeaway is that Azusa showed people wanting to receive revitalization, revival, and renewal. Throughout the Azusa Revival, people willingly engaged in the revival. People were healed by opening themselves to the actions of the Spirit. Notice that the Holy Spirit showed up during the prayer meeting when people wrestled with their struggles. In other words, pain forces people to pray, and prayer prompts the pneuma (the

Holy Spirit) to act. Although the community is older, PGBC can be revitalized. All they need is a willing spirit.

Unity among different racial, ethnic, and nationality groups is the fourth takeaway from the Azusa Street Revival. Pastor Seymour strongly believed that racial unity was essential for the church. What made the revival flourish was understanding the high intrinsic value of every person, no matter their background. The initial leadership of Azusa had an array of backgrounds, but they were still able to come together. PGBC must look for ways to eliminate conflict and unify relationships. The revitalization of PGBC involves being a multicultural church.

Another takeaway is the importance of women's ministry. Seymour acknowledged the value of women. Throughout the Azusa Street Revival, women were pivotal in spreading the beliefs of Azusa and Pentecostalism. Most of the church members and community population in Portsmouth are women. The majority demographic picture of Portsmouth shows a white woman under the age of thirty-five, while the image at PGBC shows a Black woman over fifty. This revitalization project requires an investment in equipping women to serve in ministry.

The sixth takeaway is that what Seymour and his leadership team did at Azusa sought to meet the needs of the economically disadvantaged. This was one of the reasons for the Revival in the first place. At the end of the nineteenth century, many people were suffering and in need of renewal. The Civil War had nearly destroyed the country. Leadership at PGBC must recognize the pain experienced by people within the community. Portsmouth has faced economic hardships caused by floods, lack of upward mobility, and drug epidemics, among other issues. Revitalization is only possible when

one acknowledges the inner need for it. Without this introspection, stagnation leads to death, which could be actual physical death or a sense of emptiness in one's life. The seventh takeaway from the Azusa Street Revival emphasizes the need for evangelism and spiritual renewal. At Azusa Street, there was a strong urgency for evangelism. The Holy Spirit filled the participants at this revival, motivating both men and women to engage in ministry work. This work included a range of initiatives, such as establishing new churches worldwide.

In summary, the revival of PGBC, emphasizing spiritual renewal and intellectual development, is a journey we embark on together. The Azusa Street Revival demonstrates how a small prayer meeting can achieve global impact. By uniting in prayer, we can invite the Holy Spirit to usher in a new season of revitalization for Portsmouth, Ohio. With this renewal, PGBC can catalyze the sharing of Christ's message, leading to a revitalized community through transformative change. The upcoming chapter delves into the theological aspects that underpin this revitalization, particularly examining how ecclesiology and pneumatology provide theological support for transformative change.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

In the previous chapters, I explored revitalization and restoration through the lens of my ministry, the biblical text, and a major historic event. As a seasoned minister, I have gained a unique insight into the need for revitalization in situations that require it, such as the case of PGBC. Portsmouth, Ohio, has undergone a demographic shift, necessitating a fresh approach from PGBC to drive growth. This fresh approach necessitates leadership training. Biblically, Ezekiel 37:1-14 is a significant passage related to this context. This text proves that revitalization is necessary and achievable. Ezekiel describes the vision of the valley of dry bones, where God uses him to breathe life into the bones. This passage is a powerful metaphor for revitalization, where God can breathe new life into his people.

Historically, the Azusa Revival is a recent example of this restoration, demonstrating that revitalization is not just a theoretical concept but a practical reality. The Azusa Revival was a 1906 revival in Los Angeles, California, led by William Seymour, an African American man from Louisiana. The revival's major characteristics were speaking in tongues, spiritual healing, global evangelism, women in ministry, and interracial involvement. Due to his efforts, the revival spread worldwide and significantly affected Pentecostalism's growth.

This chapter identifies a theological perspective that supports the hypothesis that if the leaders are taught revitalization through transformational change, then the leaders will be equipped to identify the changing demographic of the church congregation and surrounding community. Ecclesiology and pneumatology provide the theological framework for revitalizing PGBC. Ecclesiology is the study of the church, its nature, and its mission. It evaluates the church's identity, structure, and function.[1] On the other hand, pneumatology discusses the Holy Spirit and its role in the lives of individuals and the church. Pneumatology explains how the Holy Spirit works in the world, the church, and the individual believer.[2]

Specifically, this chapter details the meaning and action of ecclesiology in the church's life, alongside the role of pneumatology in the lives of individuals and the church. The chapter explores these theological lenses and their application to the church and the community. By the chapter's conclusion, these theological lenses help develop a strategy for revitalizing this church and the Portsmouth, Ohio, community. Eventually, the reader gains a clear picture of a theological framework of revitalization.

[1] "Ecclesiology," New World Encyclopedia, https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Ecclesiology; Guy Mansini, *Ecclesiology* (Washington, DC: Catholic University Press, 2021), 1-5.

[2] Karl Keating, "The 21 Ecumenical Councils," Catholic Answers, https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition /the-21-ecumenical-councils.

Ecclesiology

The Origin and Meaning of Ecclesiology

The term “ecclesiology” derives its meaning from two Greek words, *ecclesia* and *logia* or *logos.*[3] The former means to call people out from the world. At the same time, the latter Greek word refers to a statement, speech, or an embodiment of an idea through a word or words. Ecclesia means church in Latin, and that word carries its meaning over to the English language.[4] First Peter 2:9 identifies the church as the Lord's particular holy nation of people whom God called out of darkness into His marvelous light. The word "church" in this form first appears in Matthew 16:18 when Jesus tells Peter that his confession is the basis of Jesus’ church. Most biblical ecclesia occurrences appear after the resurrection of Jesus Christ when the disciples were establishing churches. For this reason, ecclesiology is a post-resurrection endeavor. In other words, the church becomes the church when the resurrected Jesus returns to the Father. At that point, Jesus leaves the Holy Spirit who makes His grand appearance at Pentecost.

Ecclesiology is not solely the work of a single theologian; rather, it represents a progression following the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In AD 50, fifteen to twenty years after Jesus’s resurrection, the Church convened and decided that Gentiles did not need to convert to Judaism to become followers of the Way, known as Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:26, 26:28; 1 Pt. 4:16). This decision was significant because it allowed Christianity to emerge as a distinct religion separate from Judaism. By AD 70, the

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[3] Mansini, *Ecclesiology*, 1-5.

[4] Mansini, *Ecclesiology*, 1-5.

destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem diminished Jerusalem's role within the Christian community, dispersing Jews, including Jewish Christians, throughout the Roman Empire. More than two hundred years later, the Edict of Milan concluded Christian persecution in the Roman Empire. This edict allowed Christians to practice their faith openly without fear of retribution. Freed from persecution, Christians were able to transition from meeting in homes to utilizing dedicated church buildings.

There have been over fifteen other ecumenical councils that helped to formulate the church's beliefs and understanding of the biblical text.[5] Church Fathers, such as Tertullian, Origen, Clement of Alexandria, and Augustine, attended these councils.[6] Ecumenical councils were meetings where Christians from various locations would meet to decide what was sound doctrine. Below is a brief summary of four of those meetings.

The first council of Nicaea met in 325 and resolved that Jesus Christ was of the same substance as God which makes him as divine as the Father. When the council met in Constantinople in 381, there was a question of the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and the saints decided that the Holy Spirit was also divine. The early councils helped to develop the doctrine of the Trinity. The Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon helped to explain that Jesus Christ, the Son, was fully human and fully divine.[7]

In AD 492, Pope Gelasius's 'Two Swords' theory asserted the papacy's overall authority in church and religious matters. About six hundred years later, the Christian church split over the issue of the importance of the Holy Spirit and created the Eastern

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[5] Keating, "The 21 Ecumenical Councils," Catholic.com, https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/the-21-ecumenical-councils.

[6] Lee June, *Yet with a Steady Beat* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishing, 2008), 23.

[7] Keating, "The 21 Ecumenical Councils," Catholic.com, https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/the-21-ecumenical-councils.

Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches. The Great Papal debate began in 1378 and started a conflict in determining the person or persons with authority in the church. This debate led to the Protestant Reformation, which began in 1517 when Martin Luther posted his *95 Theses*.[8] This split created the Protestant churches and led to the establishment of new Protestant denominations, such as the United Methodist Church.

Less than twenty years after the Protestant Reformation, King Henry VIII affirmed the supreme authority of the Church of England. This decision led to the establishment of the Anglican Church, which became the official church of England. The Council of Trent in 1545 met to discuss such issues with Roman Catholicism's definition. This council was significant because it reaffirmed the Catholic Church's teachings and helped to establish the Counter-Reformation.[9]

Christianity and the church reached the Americas after the Protestant Reformation of Martin Luther when the European settlers established colonies there. With them, they brought slaves from places like Africa. African slaves in the Americas had already been exposed to Christianity when they arrived in the colonies.[10] The Christian churches in Africa are some of the oldest churches in the world. In fact, one of the oldest complete versions of the Holy Bible is in Ethiopia. Ethiopia is the same location where the eunuch from whom Phillip met and received salvation in Acts 8:26-40. Within the churches in America, there continues to be discussion on who and what the church is. Consequently,

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[8] Mansini, “Ecclesiology,” 1-5.

[9] Mansini, “Ecclesiology,” 1-5.

[10] June, *Yet with a Steady Beat*, 24-28.

there have been splits among Christians which formed even more denominations. The increased denominations leave one with a question. Who and what is the church?

In conclusion, ecclesiology has evolved throughout history. Historical events have shaped the development of ecclesiology. These events continue to influence how we understand the church today. Through this study, we can better appreciate the church's role in our world. While the Gospel the church teaches remains static, the identity within society or how the community of believers progressively changes, sometimes for the better and sometimes for the worse. As a result, the church requires further introspection. The ecumenical councils and splits within the church help to highlight that the church continues to wrestle with her identity. So, by looking at the origins of the church, one understands that PGBC must continue to look at what it means to be the church.

Current Theologians of Ecclesiology

Throughout history, there have been varying interpretations of the church's identity. In recent research, Roger Haight articulates the tribal aspect of the church, which demonstrated members' loyalty and one's connection to another.[11] In contrast, the Bible portrays the church in diverse ways, including:

1. The church as the Body of Christ, emphasizing the uniqueness of each member's role and essentiality of every person (Rom. 12:4-5;1 Cor. 12:27-29).[12]
2. The church as the Family of God, highlighting the importance of building relationships within the community (Jn. 1:12; Eph. 1:5, 2:19-22, 5:1; Rom. 8:16; Gal. 6:10; 1 Jn. 3:1-2).

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[11] Robert Haight, *Christian Community in History Ecclesial Existence* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2008), 57-60; Rein Brouwer, "Ecclesiology: The Study of the Formal Church," *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Theology and Qualitative Research* (2022): 207-208.

[12] Mansini, *Ecclesiology*, 146-171.

3. The church as the Bride of Christ, representing the church as Christ's spouse which suggests that every sin committed by a believer is akin to cheating on him (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:27).[13]
4. The church as the Temple of the Holy Spirit, underscoring that the Holy Spirit inhabits and influences the church both internally and externally (1 Cor.6:19-20).[14]
5. The church as the lampstand in Revelation, which portrays the church as a light that shines in a dark world. The church is made up of people who have been brought out of darkness into God's marvelous light, and Jesus Christ is the light (Rev. 1-2, 11).

As Gerard Mannion and Lewis Mudge explain, ecclesiology is a multidisciplinary endeavor that starts with a theological foundation.[15] John Webster applies ecclesiology to comparative and social sciences recognizing that one must draw connection between theology and social sciences.[16] To understand ecclesiology, one must understand the social sciences.[17] Kimlyn Bender and Stephen Long acknowledge the complexity of ecclesiology, which leads to various interpretations of its dynamics. There is no single theory or theology of ecclesiology.[18]

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[13] Mansini, *Ecclesiology,* 127-145.

[14] Mansini, *Ecclesiology,* 93-127.

[15] Gerard Mannion and Lewis S. Mudge, "Introduction. Ecclesiology-the Nature, Story, and Study of the Church," in *The Routledge Companion to Christian Church* (London, UK: Routledge, 2008), 1-6; Brouwer, "Ecclesiology," 208-209.

[16] John Webster, "'In the Society of God': Some Principles of Ecclesiology," in *Perspective on Ecclesiology and Ethnography: Studies in Ecclesiology and Ethnography* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 200-222; Brouwer, "Ecclesiology," 208.

[17] Ivor J. Davidson, "In Memoriam: John Webster (1955-2016)," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 18, no. 4 (2016): 368; Brouwer, "Ecclesiology," 208.

[18] Kimlyn Bender and Stephen Long, *T and T Clark Handbook of Ecclesiology* (London, UK: T and T Clark, 2020), 1-8; Brouwer, "Ecclesiology," 209-210.

Ormerod indicates that ecclesiology can be quite intricate, particularly when it intersects with other fields.[19] He believes that achieving a harmonious coexistence between theology and other disciplines is paramount. He advocates that "Ecclesiology must be empirical, critical, normative, dialectic, and practical."[20] This observation implies that the church needs to actively engage in open discussions and research with academic institutions to assess its efficacy critically. Conducting empirical research enables the church to establish benchmarks for ministry, which, in turn, necessitates constructive dialogues and a quest for truth to achieve optimal results. Being critical indicates that the church must explore the good, the bad, the wicked, and the evil. At the same time, the church must wrestle with what has become normalized. Dialectic endeavor involves that the church must continue to have conversations about what and who the church is, which in turn leads to putting it into practice.

Systematic ecclesiology encompasses structure, identity, authority, and change. Structure outlines the arrangement of the church and its purpose. Identity signifies meaning and value. Authority highlights who holds power within the church. Change describes how the church adapts to an ever-evolving society. The Holy Spirit also contributes to making things new. Nicholas Healy observe the relationship between theology and non-biblical/theological theories. He compares ecclesiology to other perspectives within theology and acknowledges it as one of the most complex areas. For

[19] Neil Ormerod, "Social Science, and Ideological Critiques of Ecclesiology," in *The Oxford Handbook of Ecclesiology* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2018), 553-572; Neil Ormerod, "The Structure of a Systematic Ecclesiology," *Theological Studies* 63, no. 1 (2002): 3-30; Brouwer, "Ecclesiology," 210-211.

[20] Ormerod, "The Structure," 3.

him, ecclesiology possesses structure and employs theoretical principles to achieve its goal.[21]

An important note in a recent ecclesiological discussion comes from Dr. Lee June. He makes observations about the African and African American involvement in the history and legacy of the church. One must not overlook or miss this perspective. He notates early scholars to discuss how Africans participated in church's movement from a Jewish sect to the utmost parts of the world. For example, the one who was carrying Jesus' cross was African.[22]

Finally, ecclesiology has a connection with such things as social sciences because the study of the church involves the study of individuals and groups of people, particularly God's people. It is people called out of darkness into God's marvelous light. Recent scholars are rediscovering this vital piece of the puzzle. As a result, the church must continue to understand herself in an ever-changing environment. Has the church lost its identity or has the church rediscovered parts of her identity that have not been explored effectively?

The Nature of the Church

To fully comprehend ecclesiology, one must first understand the essence of the church. Recent findings reveal that ecclesiology goes beyond theological concepts and

[21] Nicholas Healy, "Ecclesiology, Ethnology, and the Social Sciences," in *T and T Clark Handbook of Ecclesiology* (London, UK: T and T Clark, 2020), 391-403; Brouwer, "Ecclesiology," 211-213.

[22] June, "*Yet*," 17-36.

theoretical approaches. The church is a tale that encompasses the congregation (the laypeople), bishops (pastors), and educators (theologians).[23]

John O'Brien emphasizes that the church's narrative is about how they interpret God and how the church interprets herself as the Bride of Christ. He highlights that the story is not set, but rather a constantly evolving process.[24] Thus, the Body of Christ must consistently examine her identity.

However, some aspects remain consistent, such as the divinity of the Trinity, humanity's fallen state due to sin, and an understanding of who Jesus is, among others. "Ecclesiology is the project of giving a more systematic shape to what is striven for in that praxis and to the conversation between narratives that attempt to communicate and give meaning to it [church]."[25] It is common for a church to undergo revitalization to accurately reflect its true nature. Attending church is not just a spiritual discipline; it also requires thoughtful action.

Therefore, the nature of the church must serve as the foundation for any transformation. This process begins by changing one's thought patterns, which, in turn, alters behavior and transforms one's spirit. Examining both the church's and its individual members' experiences and narratives aids in achieving transformation. Each member plays a vital role in shaping the church, including new Christians whose unique stories have led them to accept salvation. Christians should strive to express their narratives in their daily lives, thereby contributing to the overall narrative of the church.

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[23] John O'Brien, "Ecclesiology as Narrative," *Ecclesiology* 4, no. 2 (2008):148-165.

[24] O'Brien, "Narrative," 148-150.

[25] O'Brien, "Narrative," 150.

Effective ecclesiology has the potential to open new possibilities.[26] It is possible that God permitted COVID-19 to encourage the church to reevaluate its methods of operation and ways of thinking. This potential is where the concept of revitalized ecclesiology comes in, as exemplified in Revelations chapters two through three, where the Apostle John addresses the seven churches in Asia: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Each of these churches had specific issues that needed addressing for revitalization. Even in Paul's letters, he suggested that the local church he addressed required revitalization. This observation suggests that church revitalization occurs even in churches that may not appear to require it.[27]

Pleasant Green's Nature as a Church

Efforts towards revitalization are no stranger to churches, and PGBC is no exception. However, the approach toward revitalization plays a crucial role in determining the type of restoration required. Revitalization can range from minor adjustments to a complete replanting of the church. After careful research, reflection, and identification of these types, it has become evident that PGBC requires restorative hope to help achieve revitalization. The church has become introspective, and its membership has decreased from its past. With a smaller congregation, the people are seeking hope and restoration. This revitalization aligns with the biblical foundation and the ministry context, as exemplified in Ezekiel 37:1-14, where God restores the people of Israel to prominence despite their desolation. PGBC is in a city in dire need of hope. Russell

[26] O'Brien, "Narrative," 156-158.

[27] Russell N. Small, *Church Revitalization* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Ministry, 2023), 1-16.

Small suggests that this type of revitalization may require five to eight years to implement and execute fully.[28]

Facing a similar narrative (not the same) that progressively evolves and changes, churches across different Christian perspectives must have honest conversations about the new perspective on the church. This discussion creates common ground. It is common in church history for the church to continuously re-identify herself. The reason for the Ecumenical Councils is to discover what areas are seminal to the faith and what areas need to progressively change.[29]

What is the Church Called to Be and Do?

There are at least three things that the church is called to be and do. First, the church must refine, reflect, and explore its theological beliefs through Scripture. The Holy Bible is the foundation of everything the church does, says, and lives. Therefore, the church must understand what they believe. Essentially, the Scriptures answered the questions raised by the more than fifteen ecumenical councils. Even the Hebrew Scriptures and the words of Jesus resolved the issue of Gentile justification in Acts. The church's identity can be lost when there is no understanding of Scripture or the theological lens that build our faith, which includes (a) theology proper, (b) cosmology, (c) theological anthropology, (d) doctrine of revelation, (e) Christology, (f) hamartiology, (g) soteriology, (h) pneumatology (i) ecclesiology, and (j) eschatology.[30]

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[28] Small, *Church,* 15-16.

[29] O'Brien, "Narrative," 158-165.

[30] Daniel Treier, "What is Theological Interpretation? An Ecclesiological Reduction," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 12, no. 2 (2010): 155-161.

The second thing the church does is live. For the church, it means living in such a way that the world sees and experiences the light of Christ. To live this way, the church practices spiritual disciplines, such as prayer, study, and meditation, which involve staying connected to the divine. A transformation occurs when one becomes the church. The people are the church. People outside the church see something about them where Jesus becomes magnified. At the personal level, we accept, believe, and confess Jesus Christ as Lord and become baptized. Salvation begins at the personal level with a personal relationship with God and then we become a part of a saving and baptizing community.

Third, the church goes and tells. It moves from merely living as believers to actively going and sharing, making Christian ministry its central focus in life. This is where the church truly loves people despite their circumstances. The church practices hospitality towards everyone while refusing to condone sin, fault, and failure; however, it remains a place and community where people are liberated from the barriers that hinder them. In other words, individuals receive forgiveness and a new life in Christ. Going and telling encompasses the church's mission work to assist those in need and engage in the evangelistic effort to make disciples. When carried out effectively under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it reflects the spiritual maturity of both individual members and the church as a whole. Jesus issues this final commandment to His disciples to "go and make" in Matthew 28:19, "go and proclaim" in Mark 16:15, "feed" in John 21:15-18, and "be His witnesses" in Acts 1:8. Each of these scriptures suggests that the church must go beyond itself, step outside its comfort zones, and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the world.

Pneumatology

The Origin and Meaning of Pneumatology

Pneumatology, the study of the Holy Spirit, is a branch of theology that originates from two words. The first word of note is *"pneuma"* which means *"breath"* or *"spirit"* in the Greek.[31] Unlike ecclesiology, which is the study of the church, the Spirit appears at creation at the beginning of time. The Greek word "*pneuma"* refers to "*ruach"* in Hebrew. The first occurrence of *ruach* in Genesis 1:1-2 NRSV-UE says, "When God began to create the heavens and the earth, the earth was complete chaos, and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the water." This passage indicates that the Spirit or "wind," particularly the one from God, was present even though darkness covered the face of the deep. In other words, the Spirit of God is different from darkness. By identifying that the Spirit is from God, one can differentiate between the Holy Spirit and the un-holy spirit.

In further exploration, the question of what the Spirit is in operation becomes essential in pneumatology. The Spirit shows up in the Old Testament, such as when David begs God not to take his Holy Spirit in Psalms 51:11 and the evil spirit Saul received as king in 1 Samuel 16:14-15. This conflict continues into the New Testament when Jesus delivers persons with an evil (dark, unclean, tormenting) spirit, and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, left after Christ's resurrection to embody the people of God. It means that a person is either being influenced by the Holy Spirit or the evil spirit.

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[31] Greg Herrick, "4. Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit," Bible.org, https://bible.org.series page/4-pneumatology-holy-spirit.

Both the evil spirit and the Holy Spirit are a historical reality that have run concurrently with each other. There is a need for one to know the other. During the third and fourth centuries of the Church Fathers, there was a debate on the divinity of the Holy Spirit. At the Council of Constantinople in AD 381, the Church Fathers met and decided that the Holy Spirit was divine because it proceeded from God the Father and Jesus Christ, God the Son. This affirmation was just over forty years after the Council of Nicaea, which affirmed the divinity of Jesus. If Jesus is not divine, then it would be impossible that the Holy Spirit is divine since Jesus left the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth.[32]

In addition, like ecclesiology, pneumatology ends with “logos,” which means "word about" or "knowledge of."[33] When combining these words, pneumatology is the study of the Spirit, where the wind blows, and what/who the spirit breathes into. What one learns from theologians is that the activity/nature of the Spirit is what differentiates the Holy Spirit and the evil spirits. The primary focus of this research is on the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity.

In conclusion, pneumatology is a study area for those who seek to understand the nature and work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not a detached energy but a divine person equal to the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit empowers believers to live lives that please God and fulfill the mission of the church.

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[32] Keating, “The 21 Ecumenical Councils,” Catholic.com, https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/the-21-ecumenical-councils.

[33] Herrick, “Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit,” Bible.org, https://bible.org/seriespage/4-pneumatology-holy-spirit.

The Current Theologians of Pneumatology

In recent times, there has been a noticeable surge in the discourse surrounding the concept of the Holy Spirit. Notably, F. LeRon Shults has brought to light the growing interest in the Holy Spirit and a renewed appreciation of its significance in the lives of Christians. It is important to differentiate between the Spirit and spirituality. A crucial theme in these ongoing discussions is the definition of spiritual transformation and how it manifests in one's behavior, beliefs, and ethical code.[34]

During the "Spirit and Spirituality" Nordic Systematic Conference held in Copenhagen, Denmark from January 4-7, 2007, a significant presentation was made by Shults, in which he discussed three relationships that describe Pneumatology.[35] This presentation was pivotal in rediscovering the Holy Spirit in academic circles. The first relationship discussed during the presentation pertains to the connection between pneumatology (the Spirit) and matter. Previously, based on Plato's understanding, all matter was evil. This understanding created a duality between Spirit and matter.[36]

However, Eugene Rogers argues that the Spirit and matter are not distinct entities, as the Spirit has made friends with matter. For him, matter is the only way to understand the Spirit truly.[37] Rogers suggests that matter is not as evil as previously thought, and he

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[34] F. LeRon Shults, "Spirit and Spirituality: Philosophical Trends in Late Modern Pneumatology," *Pnuema* 30 (2008): 271-273; F. LeRon Shults, "Current Trends in Pneumatology," in *Nordic Systematic Theology Conference: "Spirit and Spirituality"* (Conference Lecture, Copenhagen, DEN: January 4-7, 2007), 1-2.

[35] Shults, "Spirit," 271-273; Shults, "Current Trends," 1-2.

[36] Shults, "Spirit," 271-273; Shults, "Current Trends," 1-2.

[37] Eugene Rogers, *After the Spirit: A Constructive Pneumatology from Resources Outside the Modern West* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 58; Shults, "Spirit," 274; Shults, "Current Trends," 3-4.

validates this claim by pointing to Genesis 1:31, which states that "God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was perfect, and there was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day." Since God created matter, it must be included in the "all" mentioned in the text. According to Yong and Rogers, the inherent nature of matter is not malevolent or depraved. Yong suggests that this idea is consistent with the notion of human wholeness.[38] Additionally, Rebecca Button Prichard argues that matter encompasses the five senses utilized by the Holy Spirit, indicating its omnipresence.[39] As the Spirit permeates and surrounds all aspects of existence, there can be no discordance with matter. The Spirit is a unifying force that connects all creation.

The second area of research pertains to the intricate relationship between personhood and the Holy Spirit. Personhood, as defined by possessing a "rational nature," is employed to establish that the Holy Spirit is not an object but a person.[40] This research raises the question of how the Holy Spirit can be a person and still be divine. Jurgen Moltmann suggests the significance of distinguishing the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son while acknowledging the diverse ways in which the Spirit operates within the Trinity. The personhood of the Holy Spirit lies in the essence and presence of divinity, which facilitates the communication of the divine nature, the expression of divine love,

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[38] Amos Yong, "Ruach, the Primordial Chaos, and the Breath of Life: Emergence Theory and the Creation Narrative in Pneumatological Perspective," in *The Work of the Spirit, Pneumatology and Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 183-204; Tony Richie, "The Spirit of Truth as Guide into All Truth: A Response to RA James Merrick 'The Spirit of Truth as Agent in False Religion? A Critique of Amos Yong's Pneumatological Theology of Religions with Reference to Current Trends'," *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal Charismatic Research* 19 (2010): 46-65; Shults, "Spirit," 274-275; Shults, "Current Trends," 4.

[39] Rebecca Button Prichard, *Seeing the Spirit: The Holy Spirit in Feminist Perspective* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1999), 5-6.

[40] Shults, "Spirit," 276; Shults, "Current Trends," 6.

and the flow of the divine onto and into creation.[41] Only through this divine essence and presence can individuals or communities receive and accept salvation. In other words, the Holy Spirit is indispensable for a complete understanding of the Father and the Son.

David Coffey and Scott Van Dallen have proposed that the Holy Spirit provides the most effective means of accessing the Trinity.[42] This perspective, known as Spirit Christology, highlights the importance of the Holy Spirit as previously described by the Church Fathers.[43] The emergence of this perspective was a response to the filioque clause, which led to a division between the Eastern Orthodox Church and Roman Catholicism (the Western Church). The Western Church prioritized intellectualism (and logos), while the Eastern Orthodox Church placed greater emphasis on the Holy Spirit. Hence, the presence of the Spirit is indispensable in all endeavors. Without the Holy Spirit, there is no salvation, no resurrection, no truth, and no life.

Welker presents a thought-provoking analysis of the biblical account of the Holy Spirit's role and its relevance to contemporary times. Through meticulously examining the Holy Spirit's activities as documented in the biblical texts, he discovered evidence that God actively participated in the creation process through the Holy Spirit.[44] Additionally, he saw that Jesus frequently interacted with the public in everyday settings,

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[41] Jurgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation,* trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 10-16, 268-309; Shults, "Spirit," 278.

[42] David Coffey, "Spirit and the Trinity," in *Advents of the Spirit: An Introduction to the Current Study of Pneumatology,* eds. Bradford E. Hinze and D. Lyle Dabney (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2001), 315-338.

[43] Shults, "Spirit," 278; Shults, "Current Trends," 7.

[44] Michael Welker, *God the Spirit,* trans. John F. Hoffmeyer (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1994), 158-182.

not only within the synagogue. This insight leads us to acknowledge that the Holy Spirit has a public persona, manifesting an interest in the lives of God's creation.

The third area of discussion pertains to the correlation between pneumatology and force. This study endeavors to explore how the Holy Spirit initiates movement. Initially, scholars embraced the notion that the Holy Spirit was drawing individuals towards the past to realize God's intended purpose.[45] However, recent scholarship has taken a different approach, looking to uncover the future and scrutinize the direction of the Spirit. Wolfhart Pannenberg posits that the Holy Spirit runs across time and space to steer creation toward a brighter tomorrow.[46] Essentially, God is leading us towards a superior future beyond our current state. This thought implies that salvation is an ongoing process, continuously progressing towards the future.

Theologian Robert Jenson asserts that the Holy Spirit holds the key to our future.[47] While Pannenberg's perspective suggests that the Holy Spirit only facilitates a future, Jenson believes that without the Holy Spirit, there can be no future at all. The Spirit enables us to look beyond the present and toward what lies ahead. As the alpha and omega, God works through the Holy Spirit to grant us the vision and resilience necessary to advance toward our destiny.[48]

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[45] Shults, "Spirit," 280-281; Shults, "Current Trends," 9-10.

[46] Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 76-114, 449-454; Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Toward a Theology of Nature: Essays on Science and Faith,* ed. Ted Peters (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 1-14.

[47] Robert Jenson, "What is the Point of Trinitarian Theology?" in *Trinitarian Theology Today* (Edinburgh, UK: T and T Clark, 1995), 31-43; Robert Jenson, *Systematic Theology* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1997), 157-161.

[48] Shults, "Spirit," 282.

Jenson and Cooke hold divergent perspectives on the personhood of the Holy Spirit. According to Jenson, the Holy Spirit is an impersonal entity. At the same time, Cooke regards the Holy Spirit as a benevolent and compassionate force that aids in the progression of creation with God.[49] In the view of Denis Edward, the Holy Spirit confers grace to empower individuals to establish a connection with God and accomplish a magnificent future for the world. These varying perspectives on the nature of the Holy Spirit have implications for theology and the understanding of divine agency. Consequently, further exploration and discussion of this topic are required to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian theology.[50]

The Nature of the Holy Spirit

This section aims to provide a comprehensive definition of the nature of the Holy Spirit and to identify its essence. In the preceding section, we perused recent works on pneumatology. While the Spirit was present at creation and will continue until the end, this fact alone does not define its nature totally. Thus, the discussion pivots to defining who the Holy Spirit is, which, in turn, helps us better understand its nature.

There are at least four ways to illustrate the presence of the Holy Spirit and identify its nature. The first illustration is the unique personality of the Holy Spirit. John 14:16-18 describes the Holy Spirit as the *"paraclete"* in Greek, which means an advocate, intercessor, consoler, comforter, and help. The Holy Spirit walks alongside

[49] Bernard Cooke, *Power and the Spirit of God* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), 93-102, 165-190; Shults, "Spirit," 282.

[50] Denis Edwards, *Bread of Life: A Theology of the Creator Spirit* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press, 2004), 34-46.

God's creation and must possess a personality to function as an intercessor, advocate, and so forth. Throughout the Gospel story, Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as "he," not "it." Having a personality also means that the Holy Spirit can grieve, as mentioned in Ephesians 4:30 NRSV-UE, "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption." The Holy Spirit can also be quenched, as said in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 NRSV-UE, "Do not quench the Holy Spirit." This text means that one can suppress the presence of the Holy Spirit and restrict its operation in one's life.

As declared in scripture and reaffirmed through the Ecumenical Councils, the Holy Spirit shares oneness with the Father and the Son and is co-equal and co-eternal with them. This principle means that the Holy Spirit has the exact divine nature as the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is just as important as the Father and the Son, according to the earlier section from current theologians. When Jesus returned to the Father, Jesus left the Holy Spirit as His presence with His followers. The Father sent the Son to save the world, and the Son left the Holy Spirit as His enduring presence with the church. All that the Father has, the Son has, and all that the Son has, the Holy Spirit has. Jesus promised the first disciples that Jesus would not leave them or His followers comfortless, so the Lord gave another advocate to help them and be with them forever. In other words, the Holy Spirit would be with Jesus' followers forever.

The Holy Spirit is also the proxy of creation and the new birth. It might be challenging to understand this agency since we usually reflect on what the Holy Spirit created at the beginning of time. However, the Holy Spirit is creating things now as unbelievers are becoming new, as told in 2 Corinthians 5:17. The Holy Spirit has been

involved in creative activity, and the Holy Spirit initially created anything that has been genuinely transformative in the lives of humanity. For this reason, the phrases "let there be" and "let us" are significant to human beings. Without them, creation would not exist.

Lastly, the Holy Spirit is the writer and author of the words written to detail the Divine's activity. "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16 NRSV-UE). The Holy Spirit makes it "inspired by God" or "God-breathed." The Holy Spirit breathed in humanity, and humanity became a living soul. Jesus called the Holy Spirit the Spirit of the Truth in John 14:17. The truth is in Scripture, which the Holy Spirit enlightens.

What the Holy Spirit Does and How it Impacts

Comprehending the essence of the Holy Spirit is fundamental to discussing its activities and works. The Holy Spirit is called the Paraclete, which Jesus identified as the Comforter, the Advocate, and the Spirit of Truth. Primarily, the Holy Spirit establishes and sanctions the relationship with the divine through salvation. Salvation is only achievable through the conviction of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit incites us to accept, believe, and confess that Jesus is the Lord. "It is that very Spirit bearing witness with our Spirit that we are children of God." (Rom. 8:16, NRSV-UE) In other words, the Spirit imparts life. According to John 6:63, the Spirit provides life, and the flesh is useless. The words that Jesus spoke are Spirit and Life. This new relationship presents us with a new life, as stated in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "By this, we know that we abide in him and him because he has given us of the Spirit." Hence, we must believe in Jesus Christ through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to receive the benefits. At the moment of salvation, the

Holy Spirit begins to regenerate and renew the believer. These initial actions indicate benefits but require a leap of faith on the person's part.

Secondly, after receiving salvation, the Holy Spirit dwells in and seals believers until Christ's return. Indwelling and sealing are a guarantee and safeguard of the Holy Spirit. Paul indicates in Ephesians 1:13, "In him you also when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit." To reiterate, if one has the Spirit, one has the Son and the Father. There is no separation between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

Thirdly, through indwelling and sealing, the Holy Spirit sanctifies the believer. Sanctification sets the believer apart for service to the Lord, and the believer becomes the Lord's possession. By connecting to the Lord, he becomes our Lord and Savior because the Lord has brought them out of darkness into this marvelous light. Galatians 5:16-18 says that believers are to live by the Spirit. Paul says:

> Do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law Gal.5:16-18, NRSV-UE.

The process of sanctification also requires believers to yield control of their lives to the Holy Spirit and be filled with the Spirit. The requirement is the complete surrender of one's life to God. Without this surrender, sanctification cannot be achieved, and trust in the Master cannot be established. It is important to note that trust and belief must be maintained throughout this process, which involves working towards salvation with fear and trembling. As the process continues, believers' faith and trust grow.

The fourth spiritual action involves the Holy Spirit assisting believers in developing spiritual habits, starting with prayer. Romans 8:26 describes how the Spirit helps us in our weakness, interceding with groans too deep for words when we do not know how to pray. Although Jesus teaches us what to pray in the model prayer in Matthew, believers still require assistance with prayer. Prayer is vital to every other spiritual practice, such as fasting, studying, meditation, etc. Through prayer, believers connect with the Son and the Father, receive revelations from God, gain wisdom, receive the fruit of the Spirit, and overcome sin. This process demands further strengthened faith. The Holy Spirit produces the fruit of the Spirit in believers' lives and empowers them to live a life that pleases God. Additionally, the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. The following action of the Holy Spirit is spiritual gifting, described in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4. It is the process by which God enables believers to do what they cannot do alone.

> Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, and sisters, I do not want you to be ignorant. You know that when you were Gentiles you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. Therefore, I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says, 'Let Jesus be cursed!' and no one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit. Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, and there are varieties of services but the same Lord, and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good 1 Cor.12:1-7, NRSV-UE

Every believer receives gifts from the Holy Spirit that would strengthen and reinforce the unity of the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit motivates individuals to venture beyond their familiar boundaries and to allow God to use them as confident ambassadors of the Lord. The Holy Spirit is an essential element of the Christian journey, from salvation to continuous sanctification, guidance, indwelling, and spiritual endowment.

The existence of the Holy Spirit is indispensable for anybody to genuinely embody the Christian faith. In conclusion, the Holy Spirit plays an essential role in the lives of Christians, from their salvation to their sanctification, discipline, indwelling, and spiritual gifting. It is impossible to be a true Christian without the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion

Ecclesiology and pneumatology play crucial roles in the life of the church. The church's ongoing effort to define herself (ecclesiology) is a positive process that fosters engagement. Although the meaning of the church has evolved, it must consistently strive to communicate changing cultural and contextual realities. Modifying methods and redefining the church does not imply that the truth in Scripture has changed. Rather, it reflects the church's commitment to remain relevant and impactful during progressive times, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, the field of pneumatology has recently garnered renewed interest from scholars. The Holy Spirit accompanies every individual and the church. To embrace Jesus' role as Comforter and Advocate, both individuals and the church must allow Jesus to work by surrendering their lives to the Trinity. This surrender only occurs with increasing trust and faith in God. To revitalize PGBC or any local church, it must be willing to redefine itself to stay relevant and meet people where they are, which is a vital aspect of ecclesiology. Furthermore, to inject renewal and energy into the work, the Holy Spirit must have complete control over each believer's life and work through them to extend beyond the church's walls. In other words, revitalization enables PGBC to reach its evangelistic goals. In the following chapter, transformational leadership interconnects the foundations previously discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter represents the final seminal concept that illustrates the need for revitalization at PGBC due to a significant demographic shift. To summarize, the first chapter of this study examined the integration of my ministerial calling and context, leading to the realization that my assignment at PGBC and Portsmouth aligns with divine providence. Furthermore, I discovered scriptural validation for the renaissance in Ezekiel 37:1-14. In this passage, God demonstrated that those things that are dry and dead can come back to life, despite the numerous challenges faced by the community both inside and outside of the church.

The events of the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, led by William Seymour, provided recent historical support for this renewal. Seymour's efforts were instrumental in extending Pentecostalism throughout the world. In the preceding chapter, I explained the church's significance and the Holy Spirit's role in spirituality and divine intervention, which is essential in the church's revitalization process.

This foundational chapter introduces transformational leadership theory as a fundamental component for applying revitalization, renewal, and innovation. This theory utilizes the biblical, historical, and theological foundations discussed in previous chapters to effect positive change for individuals and the community. Transformational leadership

connects to the overall project, the Bible, history, and theology. The focus of transformational leadership is on fostering positive change within individuals to enhance the overall well-being of all stakeholders.

In other words, transformational leadership is at the core for PGBC's ability to navigate the requisite revitalization and renewal. Without it, the church risks stagnation in its current dynamics. Implementing transformational leadership helps guide successful revitalization and renewal efforts, particularly when faced with a demographic shift. This chapter gives some detailed examples of successful transformational leadership in the Bible, in history, and through theological reflection. It shows the importance of developing a transformational leadership style tailored to the specific needs and contexts of PGBC. To achieve the desired outcomes, transformational leaders also understand the need for collaboration and communication.

Transformational Leadership Defined

Transformational leadership is an approach that aims to create significant and positive change within individuals and organizations. This leadership style inspires and motivates people to realize their full potential, enhancing overall effectiveness and fostering growth. It is marked by the establishment of constructive collaboration among the various elements of an organization to drive transformation. The ultimate goal of this approach is to facilitate the development of followers into more effective leaders. It is not change for change's sake; instead, each entity improves and enhances itself. Additionally, the target market will be engaged where they are.

According to Harvard Business School, transformation involves addressing significant organizational opportunities with more immediacy than incremental change.[1] Incremental change refers to changes made gradually over time, whereas transformational change is more comprehensive and abrupt. This approach is often necessary when an organization faces significant challenges or opportunities that require a dramatic response.

For transformational leaders, this urgent effort affects change in the people, process, performance, product/service, pricing (when applicable), promotion, and organizational programs.[2] These changes can involve modifying organizational vision, structure, strategy, and culture. Transformational leaders must be able to inspire and motivate their followers to embrace these changes and work towards achieving the organization's goals. External factors beyond the control of the organization often drive this transformational change. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed how organizations operate, leading to a need for new and innovative approaches to business. This deadly disease forced organizations to increase and improve social media networks, live streaming, teleconferencing, and mobile interaction to protect people's health and ensure business continuity.

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[1] "Type of Organization Change and How to Manage Them: HBS Online," Business Insight Blogs, http://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/types-of-organizational-change.

[2] Mahir Samodien, Marieta du Plessis, and Carel J. van Vuuren, "Enhancing Higher Education Performance: Transformational, Transactional, and Agile Leadership," *Journal of Human Resources Management* 22, (2024): 4-5, https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v22i0.2768; Joanes Kyongo and Lena G. Karauri, "Impact of Effective Organisational Performance: An Empirical Investigation," *Open Journal of Leadership* 13 (2024): 31-32, https://doi.org/10.4236/oji.2024.131003; Ardin Sianipar and Ayu Yulianti Putri, "The Role of Transformational Leadership in Improving School Performance a Systematic Literature Review," *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Sciences* 8, no. 12 (2025): 1403-1415, https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/ijriss.2024.8120119.

The key theorists in transformational leadership are James MacGregor Burns and Bernard Bass. Dr. Burns described the leadership of politicians in his 1978 book *Leadership*. He referred to it as transforming leadership, emphasizing the leader's role in helping others create meaningful change in the lives of individuals and organizations. Dr. Burns also outlined the concept of transactional leadership, where leaders engage in a transactional endeavor with their followers. This endeavor produces a give-and-take relationship between the leader and the follower.[3]

Bernard Bass extended the transformational leadership theory during the 1980s and 1990s by incorporating psychological elements. He introduced the term "transformational" to describe this leadership style and identified four primary characteristics of transformational leadership.[4] The first characteristic is individual consideration, which refers to the ability of influential leaders to recognize and address the unique needs of everyone by acting as mentors, listening to their concerns, creating a learning environment, and providing support to help them achieve their goals. This leadership characteristic requires investing time, coaching, and employment assistance.[5]

The second characteristic is intellectual stimulation, which challenges perceptions, promotes risk-taking and solicits ideas from team members. Intellectual stimulation aims to encourage innovation and creative thinking beyond conventional boundaries. It necessitates collaboration and a thorough analysis of the work context to be

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[3] James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1978), 257-400.

[4] Bernard Bass, *Transformational Leadership: Industrial, Military, and Educational Impact* (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum,1998), 19-32; Bernard Bass and BJ Avolio, *Improving Organizational Effectiveness Through Transformational Leadership* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994), 202-217.

[5] Mostafa Sayyadi, “The Four Aspects of Transformational Leadership,” SHRM Blog, https://blog.shrm.org/blog/the-four-aspects-of-transformational-leadership.

effective.[6] The third characteristic is inspirational motivation, where leaders inspire and make the vision compelling for followers. Through inspirational motivation, individuals feel integral to the work's success and have a sense of purpose. This attribute involves optimism about the future, confidence in completing the work, and fostering enthusiasm.[7]

Lastly, idealized influence occurs when leaders share a vision that enhances relationships between followers. This type of influence generates internal pride and responsibility within the organization. Idealized influence causes culture shifts. In addition, idealized influence considers the organizational actions' moral and ethical implications. The goal is to propel people to execute the mission of the organization.[8]

Bass posited that when these four elements are present, transformational leadership is evident. The following section explores how transformational leadership affects and connects every aspect of the project. At the end of the day, transformational leadership changes the leaders, followers, and organization and how they meet the clientele where they are through the products or services they offer. Thus, transformational leadership improves everyone and everything associated with the organization. It is a move from worse to better and from good to best.

Overall Project and Transformational Leadership

The project's primary objective is to revitalize PGBC. The church has been affected by shifting demographics, and it is imperative to address this issue with effective

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[6] Sayyadi, "The Four Aspects;" Masduki Asbari, "Is Transformational Leadership Suitable for Future Organizational Needs?," *International Journal of Social, Policy, and Law* 1, no. 1 (2020): 52-53; Asbari, "Transformational Leadership," 52-53.

[7] Asbari, "Transformational Leadership," 52-53.

[8] Asbari, "Transformational Leadership," 52-53.

leadership. Otherwise, the church continues to regress and close her doors. After conducting extensive research, it has been determined that transformational leadership would be the most appropriate style to adopt in this dynamic situation. This leadership style promotes innovation, which is essential for the growth of PGBC. Moreover, transformational leadership focuses on crucial areas such as team building, vision, and identity, all of which are necessary to overcome the challenges the ministry context faces.[9]

It is crucial to note that transformational leadership is not exclusive or undemocratic. Transformational leadership does not emphasize the leader's charisma over other people's needs. Instead, it prioritizes each member and organization's growth and development.[10] This leadership approach is ideal for organizations that seek to adopt new strategies to meet their changing demographics and explore creative ways to engage their followers and target audience. By adopting transformational leadership, PGBC is able to address the challenges arising from shifting demographics and ensure that the organization continues to grow and thrive.

Bible and Transformational Leadership

Although James McGregor Burns was the first to describe transforming (now transformational) leadership as such in the late 1970s, its principles existed for a significant period before that time. In the Old Testament, God chose transformational leaders to guide his people toward achieving their objectives of being his chosen people.

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[9] Asbari, "Transformational Leadership," 51-55.

[10] Asbari, "Transformational Leadership," 51-55.

These leaders were known for their ability to inspire and motivate their followers towards the common goal: God's chosen people were to be the means of blessing for the rest of the world. The New Testament also contains examples of transformational leadership, with conversion and salvation viewed as acts of radical change. While the principles of transformational leadership may differ between the Bible and the business world, there is no denying that the Bible provides a rich source of examples for those who seek to understand this concept. From this point in this chapter, the research profiles some biblical examples of transformational leadership.

Ezekiel

Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, demonstrated transformational leadership when he encountered God in the valley of dry bones, as described in the biblical foundation chapter. God led him to the barren and desolate valley, which symbolized death and despair. Upon his arrival, the valley's dryness troubled Ezekiel. His observation and concern for what was occurring in the valley exemplify individualized consideration. The prophet recognized the bones' deadly condition and felt compelled to take action to revive them. As a priest's son, he had faith that God would provide him with the strength needed to accomplish this task. Consequently, he could not simply stand by and watch the bones remain lifeless and dry.

Ezekiel was a prophet with the authority to speak to and on behalf of God, exemplifying idealized influence. He experienced desolation around him, yet he knew what God could accomplish. One day, God commanded him to prophesize and bring a pile of bones to life. Through Ezekiel's words, the wind of the Spirit inspired the bones to

come to life and once again be God's people. Though they had been dead, through the power of God, they were revived. This story indirectly contains inspirational motivation. The Spirit gives life to the bones after Ezekiel speaks to the wind and the bones. Ezekiel instilled hope in the bones, and when they came to life, they realized how good God had been to them.

Solomon

Another transformational leader of the Old Testament is Solomon. Solomon was the third king of the United Kingdom of Israel. Throughout his reign, he displayed quality moral standards and exceeded expectations, despite his mistakes he made with women. Plus, Solomon casted a vision of building the temple to the people of Israel given under the guidance of the Lord.[11] This standard gave Solomon influence. His inspirational motivation inspired people to help build the temple that God promised to his father David. Over 180,000 Israelites felt motivated to help in the building of the new temple.[12] Solomon says the following,

> I intend to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD said to my father David, Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, shall build the house for my name. Therefore, command that cedars from the Lebanon be cut for me. My servants will join your servants, and I will give you whatever wages you set for your servants, for you know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians. When Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly and said, 'Blessed be the LORD today, who has given to David a wise son to be over this great people. Hiram sent word to Solomon, 'I have heard the message that you have sent to me; I will fulfill

[11] Matt Garris, "Transformational Leadership in Constructing the Temple," Matt Garris, https://www.mattgarris.com/post/transformational-leadership-in-constructing-the-temple.

[12] Matt Garris, "King Solomon's Transformational Leadership," Matt Garris, https://www.mattgarris.com/post/biblical-leadership academic#~: text=Solomon%20demonstrated %20his%20ability%20to,his%20subjects'%20concerns%20and%20needs; Garris."

> all your needs in the matter of cedar and cypress timber' 1 Kgs 5:5-8, NRSV-UE).

The evidence of Solomon's intellectual stimulation in the Old Testament appears in the cannon of the Old Testament itself. Solomon wrote Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. As the wisest person that ever lived, Solomon evaluated risks, sought suggestions from the people and God, and promoted innovation, to ensure the building of the temple. With his intellect, Solomon was able to convince King Hiam, a non-Israelite leader, to give supplies for the building of the temple.[13] Additionally, Solomon was a good listener, which proved his consideration of each person. As a result of his attentiveness, he rotated the workers in Lebanon to ensure that they would remain fresh and spent time with their families. Despite his flaws, Solomon was a faithful king.[14]

Jesus

In the New Testament, Jesus, the second person of the Trinity, was a transformational leader as He prepared more transformed leaders. His leadership depicted the kingdom of God under the power of the Holy Spirit. His disciples were learners who followed his direction.[15] Jesus lived with morality, divine guidance, and an unwavering perseverance, demonstrating idealized influence.[16] He faced opposition from the religious

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[13] Garris, "King Solomon;" Garris, "Transformational Leadership."

[14] Garris, "King Solomon;" Garris, "Transformational Leadership."

[15] Robert E. Colemen, "Preparing Transformational Leadership the Jesus Way," *Knowing and Doing* 5 (2008): 1-3.

[16] Brian Moore, "The Transformative Mind of Jesus Christ and Biblical Principles for Today," in *the Mind of a Leader: A Christian Perceptive of the Thoughts, Mental Models, and Perceptions That Shape Leadership Behavior,* ed. Bruce E. Winston (Cham, DE: Springer International Publishing, 2022), 199-216.

leaders but remained on the path to Calvary. When he was born, he only did what his father told him. The crowds were impressed by his work, yet he remained humble.

He inspired his disciples to go and make more disciples, a mission commonly known as the Great Commission. To ensure that they would have a helper, he sent the Holy Spirit as a sign of his divine presence. Being God wrapped in flesh meant that Jesus was incredibly wise. He used parables to illustrate his kingdom and guide his disciples on how to remain faithful.[17] What was so amazing is that he began teaching at the age of thirteen in the synagogue, and his insights even astonished the religious leaders and teachers. Jesus understood who he was and what he was discussing because he embodies the wisdom of God. The Lord not only encouraged intellectual exploration but also addressed the comprehensive needs of individuals, including their mental, physical, and spiritual well-being. In essence, Jesus considered everyone's needs. He looked beyond people's faults to see their needs.[18]

Initially, he had twelve disciples, and that twelve grew to seventy. That seventy multiplied to thousands and now millions across the globe. Every person Jesus transformed became a transformational leader in their respective areas of spiritual giftedness and calling. This strategy involved seeking out individuals who are eager to learn. His approach includes (1) those who desire growth and to learn, (2) relational aspect of the discipleship, (3) showing those persons the how of kingdom learning, (4) teaching obedience, (5) collaborative efforts in the work, (6) continued growth, (7) reproduction of more disciples, and (8) faith as the transformative agent.

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[17] Moore, "Transformative," 199-216.

[18] Moore, "Transformative," 199-216.

Paul

Of all the New Testament Christian disciples, Paul exhibited the clearest evidence of transformational leadership. Even in his epistle to the Romans, he discussed transformation directly. Romans 12:2 NRSV-UE says, "Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."[19] This apostle is about transforming God's entire creation, whether Jew or Gentile.

One example of his transformational leadership is his relationship with Timothy. He demonstrated idealized influence by equipping Timothy for ministry, even during moments of conflict and struggle. What motivated the young preacher-pastor Timothy was Paul's encouragement for him to remain faithful to God. Timothy needed to trust God regardless of the circumstances.[20] Paul's guidance stimulated Timothy by teaching him the Word of God. Paul's individual consideration showed he cared, especially as Timothy faced challenges in his ministry.[21]

The research above validates that transformational leadership is not a recent phenomenon. In fact, the biblical text illustrates transformational leadership. Ezekiel exhibited transformational leadership when God used him to bring dry bones in the valley to life. While Solomon was not a prophet, he was still a transformational leader as he built the temple as God promised to his father, David. Moving into the New Testament, transformational leadership remains essential. Jesus epitomized transformational

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[19] Michael Cooper, "The Transformational Leadership of the Apostle Paul: A Contextual and Biblical Leadership for Contemporary Ministry," *Christian Education Journal* 2, no. 1 (2005): 48-61.

[20] Cooper, "Transformational," 48-61.

[21] Cooper, "Transformational," 48-61.

leadership as he was God embodied in flesh, bringing the kingdom of God to earth. He made disciples who produced more disciples. Finally, the apostle Paul emerged as the transformative leader after the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. He was able to offer transformational leadership to many evangelists, pastors, and other members of the early Christian church. Notably, he helped transform his "son in the ministry," Timothy.

History and Transformational Leadership

In the preceding section of this chapter, I have illustrated instances of transformational leadership in the biblical text. While it may seem like a modern concept, transformational leadership has been a prevalent force throughout history. It is imperative to enact change and bring about a beneficial impact on society. Therefore, this chapter explores some historical examples of transformational leadership that extend beyond the Bible.

William Seymour

The forthcoming discussion centers on William Seymour and the Azusa Street Revival, focusing on the transformative leadership exhibited by Pastor Seymour in expanding Pentecostalism. Despite the racial segregation prevalent in the United States at the time, Seymour's idealized influence distinguished him as an African American leader. In January 1906, Pastor Julia Hutchins invited Seymour to preach at the Los Angeles Santa Fe Street Holiness Mission, with a subsequent request to become the mission's pastor. Seymour's acceptance of the request led to his excommunication from the church, thus marking the beginning of the Azusa Street Revival. His influence led people to come

to Bonnie Brae, starting the Azusa Street Revival after Pastor Hutchins excommunicated him from this church. [22]

Seymour's leadership style was characterized by individualized consideration. He accorded equal value to all persons regardless of their gender or race, a remarkable feat considering the segregation prevalent at the time. Additionally, Seymour celebrated the gifts of women, a noteworthy occurrence at that time.

Seymour's intellectual prowess is evident in his creation of the Apostolic Faith newspaper, which documented the happenings and learnings from the revival.[23] This publication achieved remarkable success, disseminating the message of the revival worldwide. As the revival's congregation grew, Seymour had to find a new location, eventually leading to 312 Azusa Street, where the revival became widely recognized. Seymour's remarkable motivation enabled him to enlist volunteers to maintain the building housing the revival.

Abraham Lincoln

James MacGregor Burn's *Leadership* used Abraham Lincoln as an example. Burns argues that Lincoln transformed from a transactional leader, where gains and losses are exchanged, to a transformational leader. Lincoln, who was in office during the Civil War that threatened to divide the North and South, had to act. As a lawyer, he

[22] Denzil R. Miller, "The Women of Azusa Street: Four Spirit-Anointed Leaders of the Azusa Street Revival," *AlA Publications* 9 (2015): 9-10; Mookgo Solomon Kgatia, "The Influence of Azusa Street Revival in the Early Developments of the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa," *Missionalia* 41, no. 3 (2016): 323, https://doi.org/10.31380/ 2573-6345.1244.

[23] Blumhofer, "Revisiting Azusa Street," 60-61.

expressed his idealized influence by fighting against the persecution of African Americans and the legacy of slavery, which he knew was ethically wrong.[24]

Lincoln's vision for a united country inspired his followers, promoting equality among all people. This vision motivated people to join the cause for freedom.[25] Due to the hostility surrounding slavery, Lincoln was cautious in presenting his vision. The Gettysburg Address marked a turning point in his endeavor. He conveyed his vision by describing the horrors of war and the deaths it caused. In contrast, he presented the beauty of freedom for all people that would result from the abolition of slavery.[26]

Despite having a vision that would impact the entire nation, Lincoln maintained a personal touch and met people where they were. He spoke to several soldiers in person, listened to their wartime experiences, and showed empathy and compassion.[27] It is not surprising that he was a well-loved president before his assassination.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s ministry exemplified the transformational leadership model. He role-modelled idealized influence, showing what it meant to fight for one's beliefs. King stood up for the rights of minorities and believed that injustice anywhere causes problems for justice everywhere. He became the mouthpiece of the Civil Rights

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[24] Priscilla Knolle, "Lessons from Lincoln: Portrait of Transformational Leadership for Uncertain Times," LinkedIn of Priscilla Knolle, https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/lessons-from-lincoln-portrait-transformational-times-priscilla; Gill R. Hickman, *Leading Change in Multiple Contexts: Concepts and Practices in Organizational Community, Political, Social, and Global Change Settings* (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, 2010), 69.

[25] Knolle, "Lessons."

[26] Knolle, "Lessons."

[27] Knolle, "Lessons;" Gordon Leidner, "Lincoln the Transformational Leader," *Lincoln Herald* (Fall 2002): 111-118, https://greatamericanhistory.net/transforming_leader.htm.

Movement and was even imprisoned for standing up for what was right. While in prison, he wrote the Letter from a Birmingham Jail, which impacted many others.[28]

Dr. King Jr. had a clear vision of unification and was optimistic that racial unity was possible.[29] Despite opposition, his vision, presented in the "I Have a Dream" speech, motivated others to support him. While some believed in violent methods of unification, Dr. King remained faithful to the non-violent approach.

What captivated many leaders was King's ability to use words in speeches and letters.[30] He received a Ph.D. from Boston University and knew how to express himself. Additionally, he came from a preaching pastor tradition that dates back to at least his grandfather. At the time of his work, he was the pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, where he began his fight for the civil rights of minorities from 1954 to 1960. In 1960, he became the pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. King wrote and spoke well to stimulate the audience's attention, making him a powerful force for change.

The section of this chapter clearly outlines some examples of transformational leadership in recent years. This fact means transformational leaders have remained impactful no matter the situation in history. The chapter will turn to the discussion of transformational leadership in theology.

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[28] David McGuire and Kate Hutchings, "Portrait of a Transformational Leader: The Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.," *Leadership and Organization Development Journal* 28, no. 2 (2007): 154-166.

[29] McGuire and Hutchings, "Portrait,"154-166.

[30] McGuire and Hutchings, "Portrait,"154-166.

Theology and Transformational Leadership

The topic of transformational leadership holds relevance in theological discussions that center around the study of God. One can view God through multiple perspectives, such as ecclesiology and pneumatology. These two lenses of theology have been deemed significant for revitalization conversations. Here in the next section, one will see how transformational leadership manifests within the framework of ecclesiology and pneumatology.

Ecclesiology

Transformational leadership is connected to ecclesiology and the study of the church. Throughout history, the church has continuously transformed itself. As mentioned earlier, transformational leadership assists organizations in addressing their identity, a theme the church has grappled with over the years. These leaders guide the mindsets of the people while also taking into account the needs of each individual. Transformational leadership has enabled people to develop habits that are beneficial and productive for both the members and the church itself.

With transformational leadership, the church looks for ways for the church to be meaningful and relevant for the ministry context. This process may require thinking outside of the box. Churches demand to have a vibrant core and strong networks. In this environment, there is innovation and humility. Ultimately, transformational leadership helps to build up believers and reach the unchurched and unsaved. As a result, transformational leadership advances the church's missions.[31]

[31] "Transformative Leadership," Faith and Leadership.

Two Examples of Transformational Leaders in Ecclesiology

To validate the impact of transformational leadership in ecclesiology, this section highlights two Christian leaders who exemplified transformational leadership. Martin Luther is one such example. His monastic life set a standard for those around him, emerging from humble beginnings. In July 1505, Luther embarked on his journey to become a monk, believing that living righteously would protect him from hell and guarantee salvation. As a leader in the Roman Catholic Church, he grew frustrated with the actions of religious leaders, particularly the priests. This monk held high expectations for leadership, as they were meant to serve as a model for everyone in the church.[32]

Like the moneychangers in the Gospels, the priests used the church as a money-making enterprise. Congregants had to pay for their salvation, their forgiveness, etc., but Luther was confident that salvation was by faith alone. As a result, this monk knew that something must radically change. His enlightenment through Scripture and academic endeavors with grammar, logic, and physical science motivated him to do something creative. His transformation as a leader culminated in his nailing of the 95 Theses to the door of the Wittenberg Castle Church on October 31, 1517. This document sketched out the needed changes with the Roman Catholic Church and helped to develop the Protestant Reformation and the Protestant church.[33]

The second Christian leader that exhibited transformational leadership is Richard Allen. Richard Allen was born in slavery in Philadelphia during a time when landowners

[32] "Martin Luther – 95 Theses, Quotes, and Reformation," Biography.com, https://www.biography.com/religious-figures/martin-luther.

[33] "Martin Luther – 95 Theses, Quotes, and Reformation," Biography.com, https://www.biography.com/religious-figures/martin-luther.

were themselves slave owners. Allen demonstrated remarkable tenacity in his pursuit of freedom for his entire immediate family and worked tirelessly to secure their freedom. At seventeen, he received salvation and became deeply devoted to the teaching of Methodism. His persistence and his hard work were on display with Methodism. He believed strongly in Methodism and expected Methodists to be guided by its theology. God compelled him to preach the Gospel, and he became a minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church.[34]

Eventually, he joined the St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church, which welcomed individuals of all races. However, there was one problem. African Americans were not able to freely worship the Lord. The white leadership and membership only allowed African American leaders and members to worship in certain ways at certain times. Rev. Absalom Jones and Rev. Allen saw the problem and had no other choice but to break from the Methodist Episcopal Church. As a result, Rev. Absalom Jones and Rev. Allen established the Free African Society, which provided aid to African Americans. In addition, Allen founded the Bethel Church, now known as the mother church of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME). The formation of the AME church was the first African American Christian denomination here in this country.[35]

Allen also inspired prominent figures, including Frederick Douglass, Daniel Payne, and Morris Brown, through his hard work and dedication. He fervently advocated

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[34] "Richard Allen – Life, Death, and Facts," Biography.com, https://www.biography.com/religious-figures/richard-allen; "Richard Allen, Bishop, and AME Leader Born," African American Registry, https://aaregistry.org/story/richard-allen-bishop-ames-first-leader/; "Richard Allen," Encyclopedia Britannica, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Richard-Allen.

[35] "Richard Allen – Life, Death, and Facts," Biography.com, https://www.biography.com/religious-figures/richard-allen; "Richard Allen, Bishop, and AME Leader Born," African American Registry, https://aaregistry.org/story/richard-allen-bishop-ames-first-leader/; "Richard Allen," Encyclopedia Britannica, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Richard-Allen.

for the freedom of all African Americans and the Methodist tradition. His creativity and innovation established the AME as a hub for African American education. Today, AME institutions of higher learning exist nationwide, such as Wilberforce University, Central State University, and Payne Theological Seminary, to name a few. Richard Allen's life and work exemplify how theology can positively influence society, and his efforts have contributed to transforming both the church and the country for the better.

Pneumatology

The re-discovery of the Holy Spirit's importance has recently been a significant development. As explained in the preceding chapter, the Holy Spirit is as equally crucial as God the Father and Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The Trinity is a singular entity with no limits or separations within it. Transformational leadership in the church is distinguished from secular transformational leadership in business by the Holy Spirit's vital role.

In secular transformational leadership, the focus is on the leaders themselves, who provide idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. In contrast, when believers gather as the church, the Holy Spirit becomes the means of transformation and the agent of transformational leadership.

The Holy Spirit is responsible for initiating idealized influence, which gives the leader a sense of mission and the local church leader's (pastor's) vision and instills pride, respect, and trust in the congregation. Human charisma is not what produces these outcomes. In contrast, secular leaders persuade people to adopt new strategies. The Holy Spirit's mission has long-term and short-term objectives for the local congregation, and

the leader can live a moral life and gain influence through the Holy Spirit's guidance. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, asserts that the Holy Spirit leads people into all truth.[36]

The Holy Spirit communicates the leader's divine expectations to the followers through inspirational motivation. This communication articulates the church's vision and mission in a profound yet practical way. Proverbs 29:18a KJV emphasizes the importance of vision: "Where there is no vision, the people perish." The transformational leader must communicate this vision to the people because the Holy Spirit is God's voice, not just His wind. When God communicates with the transformational leader, the Holy Spirit speaks.[37]

The third characteristic is intellectual stimulation, facilitated by the Holy Spirit, who stimulates the mind as the Spirit of Truth. The transformational leader and the followers are surprised by what the Holy Spirit displays through them. Through the Holy Spirit's wisdom, the transformational leader can solve problems in the church. While the Holy Spirit stimulates human being's intellect, the Holy Spirit also recognizes the importance of each member within the local congregation by meeting people where they are. Thus, the Holy Spirit provides discernment to the leader and shows consideration to each member.

In summary, transformational leadership has played a crucial role in the growth and development of the church throughout history. As has been discovered, the Holy Spirit is a proxy through which transformational leadership occurs in Christianity and the

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[36] Thomas O. Scarborough, "Defining Christian Transformational Leadership," *Conspectus: The Journal of the South African Theological Seminary* 10, no. 1 (2010): 63-65.

[37] Scarborough, "Defining," 58-87.

church. In other words, the Holy Spirit guides transformed leaders, and the transformed leaders help develop transformed followers into leaders in the area of their divine call.

Conclusion

This chapter proves the theological, historical, and biblical utilization of the transformational leadership theory for renewal, innovation, and transformation. The project aimed to apply transformational leadership to help facilitate revitalization and renewal. The demographic shift in the ministry context necessitates all tiers of leadership and the congregation to drastically change how ministry is conducted.

Transformational leadership is a biblical concept practiced by leaders such as kings and prophets in the Old Testament. The prophet Ezekiel, for instance, brought a valley of dry bones to life, while Solomon, the third king of the United Kingdom of Israel, was renowned for his wisdom, wealth, power, and building of the Temple. These types of leaders have continued to impact people beyond the biblical text, such as William Seymour's leadership in growing the Pentecostal movement in America.

Transformational leadership is not limited to biblical times or religious contexts. Abraham Lincoln navigated the United States of America through the Civil War between the northern and southern states over the issue of slavery. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. fought social ills through the Civil Rights Movement, demonstrating how transformational leadership can extend beyond the church and into the world. Theologically, research has found a connection between the church and transformational leadership. For the church to be effective in the current time, it requires transformational leadership. The Holy Spirit is the agent of transformation and transformational

leadership. Without the Holy Spirit, transformational leadership from the Christian perspective is either lacking or completely absent.

To bridge the gap, PGBC's future hinges on revitalization and renewal through transformational leadership. The church has been affected by demographic shifts, resulting in stagnation. PGBC must adopt a new, revitalized ministry approach to attract a broader demographic and stimulate growth. The church's leaders and members must be the driving force behind this change and work together to achieve this progress by utilizing a revitalization methodology. This effort demands a willingness to change, adapt, and innovate to meet the needs of the current demographic. Revitalization can only be achieved through transformational leadership. At that point, the church can overcome stagnation and thrive. In this research's last chapter, the project analysis chapter details the project implementation and its interaction with the biblical, historical, theological, and interdisciplinary foundations.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter explains the project in detail and how it interacts with the four foundation chapters to show how the leaders of PGBC must be taught revitalization through transformational change, which leads to being equipped to identify the changing demographics. The biblical, historical, theological, and interdisciplinary foundations set the groundwork for revitalization.

Biblical Foundation

The first foundation is rooted in the biblical perspective of Ezekiel 37:1-14. This passage illustrates that our work aligns with the Word of God in three essential ways: principle, precept, and sound exegesis. Firstly, this work emphasizes the vital role of the Holy Spirit. The text implies that God's people must renew spiritually to restore their vitality. Secondly, it acknowledges the church's presence, brokenness, spiritual dryness, and the necessity for unity within the Body of Christ. The church must infuse life into the community. Lastly, this work stresses the importance of the Word of God as well as the words of its leaders. The Lord must effect transformation in the leader, the congregation, and the organization as a whole.

Historical Foundation

The second foundation describes how the project relates to the Azusa Street Revival, lending recent historical credibility. There are several connections to this revival. This work first emphasizes the significance of the leader's spiritual journey, a crucial aspect of transformational leadership. William Seymour's spiritual journey culminated in the Azusa Street Revival. Next, this work highlights the importance of prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit. The Azusa Street Revival began with prayer and people's willingness to invite the Holy Spirit to intercede. This takeaway aligns with the importance of spiritual disciplines, particularly prayer, in revitalization efforts. Thirdly, this work underscores the significance of women in ministry. During the Azusa Street Revival, women played a pivotal role in the spread and success of the movement. In fact, women have been instrumental in advancing the work of ministry at PGBC and Portsmouth, Ohio.

Additionally, this work fosters unity within the body of Christ. The Azusa Street Revival brought together individuals from various nations and races. This emphasis on unity reflects the essence of the kingdom of God. Finally, this research focuses on evangelism. The primary objective of the Azusa Street Revival was to disseminate the Gospel. This is crucial because evangelism serves as the lifeblood of ministry and represents the last commandment given by Christ before His ascension to the Father.

Theological Foundation A (Ecclesiology)

Ecclesiologically speaking, this work explores the faithfulness of the church to its beliefs while evolving to meet the changing needs of the context. The church must

wrestle with the identity of what it means to be God's people. Change is critical to transformation. This revival brings hope to a world plagued by such things as discrimination and spiritual emptiness. In other words, transforming the church requires understanding its identity and purpose. This work shows that leaders can be transformed while preserving the core tenets of their faith. Without this continued work, revival and church growth is impossible.

Theological Foundation B (Pneumatology)

The Holy Spirit is essential for revitalizing the church and its members. To achieve this revitalization, the church must completely surrender its life to the Holy Spirit. Every member of the body of Christ has the Holy Spirit residing within, acting as a comforter, helper, advocate, sustainer, and more. It is the Holy Spirit that initiates and ensures transformation. The events of the Azusa Street Revival demonstrate the significant impact of the Holy Spirit's influence. In essence, the Holy Spirit must be present and active to energize both church members and the wider community. The success of the study depends on applying appropriate pneumatological and ecclesiological principles, with the Holy Spirit serving as the driving force behind the process.

Interdisciplinary Foundation

The interdisciplinary foundation identifies transformational leadership as the ideal leadership dynamic for this work. This theory champions transformative change by uplifting the well-being of individuals and the entire church community, fostering a

vibrant and supportive environment that flourishes together. The research demonstrates that transformational leadership possesses biblical, theological, and historical validity. Consequently, this work aims to promote and develop transformational leaders, breathing life into the church and the community. Transformational leadership is crucial to the success of this research. These academic foundations are an essential component of the overall research and are interconnected with one another.

In conclusion, the research is valid, linking the project to the synergy between context and calling, as well as to the foundational chapters. It supports a project to validate its hypothesis, a proposition that has the potential to significantly influence our understanding of leadership amid changing demographics: "If leaders are taught revitalization through transformational change, they will be equipped to identify the changing demographics of the church congregation and surrounding community."

Methodology

Methodology Approach

This project implementation encompassed eight two-hour workshop sessions conducted every Monday from September 9th to October 28th. To accommodate participants returning from their workplaces, each session commenced at 5:30 PM and concluded at 7:30 PM. I provided light refreshments to foster a comfortable environment.

The sessions began with a prayer of guidance, followed by lectures. These led to conversations and discussions to uncover valid answers and pose relevant questions. Our discussion focused on revitalization and its implications. Participants were given

significant time to reflect on how these topics related to their personal lives, the church, and the entire community. This reflection period enabled them to explore how to apply the knowledge gained to their everyday lives.

While we could only address selected aspects of the subject, each weekly discussion prompted participants to reflect on the meaning of revitalization and its significance to PGBC and Portsmouth, Ohio. In the seventh session, we identified the key elements of this paradigm based on our conversations. This study asserts that PGBC members have a distinct opportunity to gain experience and enhance their knowledge and understanding of revitalization and its effects. I hoped for the participants to learn, grow, and build connections with diverse individuals throughout this journey.

Pre-Test and Post-Test Questionnaire

This study employed pre-test and post-test questionnaires to evaluate participants' growth. The first question focused on assessing their understanding of revitalization, highlighting the importance of engaging in transformational change. The second question encouraged participants to think about their roles in developing or promoting new ministries, as revitalization includes both introducing new activities and revitalizing existing ones. The next question prompted participants to identify key areas for revitalizing PGBC, such as applying the teachings of the Holy Bible, learning from history, understanding church and community identities, being guided by the Holy Spirit, having knowledgeable leadership who understands change, and making relevant observations. The fourth question provided a framework for participants to articulate their

vision for revitalization. Finally, participants reflected on how they could recognize revitalization at PGBC, transitioning from theoretical learning to practical application.

Group Discussion Questions

During the initial six weeks of the study, participants engaged in weekly discussion questions to assess their understanding of revitalization and its implications. In the first week, the discussion questions focused on how participants could contribute to ministry activities that would attract new individuals and revive energy within the church. This inquiry prompted participants to evaluate their own involvement in ministry. The second week's discussion question encouraged participants to reflect on the biblical texts that help identify and assess ministry needs within their specific context and how they could assist in addressing those needs, which is vital for revitalization, as understanding the needs is essential for a revitalized ministry. It is imperative for the church, as commanded by Jesus, to meet the community's needs. PGBC offers numerous opportunities to achieve this mission.

During the third week, participants examined how PGBC could learn from the Azusa Street Revival and apply relevant principles. They reflected on whether they had implemented or would implement the insights gained from this historical event, acknowledging that revitalization is achievable and that certain principles can be uniquely adapted to their current context.

During the fourth week, participants addressed issues related to church identity. They acknowledged that for revitalization to happen, the church must have a clear understanding of its identity. Participants reflected on their own perceptions of identity

and relevance, particularly in instances where they felt the church was misaligned. A fundamental aspect of revitalization is re-establishing relevance in the contemporary context. Additionally, participants noted a heightened emphasis on the Holy Spirit that week, acknowledging that the Holy Spirit has always been present and does not require discovery. In the fifth week, discussion questions focused on the implications of transformational leadership for participants' lives and the church's potential to impact the community through nonprofit transformational leadership practices.

In the final discussion question, participants were asked to review specific topics that had previously engaged their attention and identify areas in which they had participated in related ministries. These topics included evangelism, mentorship, education, and fellowship. Their response to this inquiry is likely to suggest which area necessitates transformation.

Journaling Entries

The project methodology involved separate journal entries for each of the first four weeks and for week six. In the first journal assignment, participants were encouraged to reflect on their overall feelings regarding ministry in Portsmouth, Ohio. They articulated the most and least effective strategies they had encountered in this context and examined the mutual value and benefits of ministry. The goal was to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' ministerial environment in Portsmouth and to identify areas for revitalization. In the second journal assignment, participants reflected on how they keep their ministry "alive and kicking." They shared insights from their

personal Christian journeys and offered advice on maintaining a vibrant ministry. This exploration allowed participants to provide mentorship based on their experiences.

In the third week, participants faced the challenge of engaging with their experiences in multicultural ministry work in Portsmouth. They discussed the importance of revitalizing both the church and the community through multicultural engagement and articulated how they would connect with individuals from diverse backgrounds. This assignment encouraged them to think creatively and expand their perspectives.

During the fourth week, participants shared their trials and tribulations in ministry. Echoing the theme of the previous week, they offered guidance for those who felt adrift. The focus on revitalization continued as they reflected on their experiences and lessons learned, aiming to bring new life and context to their ministry.

Finally, the last journal entry invited participants to reflect on innovative thinking. They were encouraged to be creative, understanding that revitalization often depends on the ability to adapt. Recognizing that demographics have changed, the participants elaborated on the importance of embracing transformation in ministry practices.

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

In week five, after concluding the engaging discussion questions, the participants completed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, an insightful tool developed by Bruce J. Avolio and Bernard M. Bass. This questionnaire sheds light on transformational, transactional, and passive leadership traits of the individuals. It evaluates the participants' level of transformational leadership across four essential qualities:

(1) *Idealized Influence*: This characteristic measures how well someone connects with the aspirations and dreams of others, inspiring them to reach their full potential.
(2) *Inspirational Motivation*: This feature captures a leader's talent for sharing a strong, compelling vision that excites and energizes others.
(3) *Intellectual Stimulation*: This quality reflects a leader's ability to spark innovative thinking and encourage team members to share their creative ideas.
(4) *Individual Consideration*: This attribute is all about providing personal support and development that caters to each individual's unique needs and fosters their growth.[1]

On the other end of the spectrum, this questionnaire evaluates the transactional leadership of the participants, using two main features: (1) *Contingent Reward*: With this trait, leaders recognize and reward team members for their achievements.[2] (2) *Management by Exception*: This approach focuses on leaders stepping in only when necessary to ensure operations.[3] Lastly, the questionnaire also discusses passive leadership, or laissez-faire leadership, which allows the organization to operate with little oversight.[4]

To supercharge revitalization efforts, participants must actively engage with and embody transformational leadership qualities. These individuals can nurture the growth of other transformational leaders, driving the community and the church forward. Transformational leaders build trust, maintain integrity, encourage innovation, and prioritize personal development.

As the participants completed the questionnaire using a Likert-like scale, they could reflect deeply on their leadership identities and assess their transformational traits.

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[1] Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publication, Inc., 2019), 169-173.

[2] Northouse, *Leadership*, 173.

[3] Northouse, *Leadership*, 173-174.

[4] Northouse, *Leadership*, 174.

A strong presence of these attributes boosts their ability to lead revitalization initiatives, and it shows that those lacking these qualities might benefit from targeted training in these key competencies. Together, we can foster a community rich in transformational leadership!

Project Implementation

Week One: Seminar Introduction

The seminar introduction for the research project commenced on September 9th. The participants included members from PGBC who have made a significant impact on the church and/or in the community. Each participant completed a pre-study questionnaire to assess their understanding of revitalization through transformational change and its prerequisites. This pre-study questionnaire took approximately ten minutes to finish. Following these ten minutes, I provided an overview of the next eight weeks of the seminar in Seminar Introduction #One. After a brief break, I explored the synergy between ministry call and context in Seminar Introduction #Two. I established the groundwork for the seminar and guided the participants in understanding the importance of revitalization through transformational change while promoting a positive outlook. This discussion helped alleviate their fears about the transformation process and ultimately contributed to a stronger, more dynamic community.

Revitalization benefits both the participants and their communities, contributing to a brighter future for everyone. The needs of PGBC in Portsmouth, Ohio, aligned with my skills and experiences. At the end of the lecture, participants wrote a journal entry on

the overview of ministry in Portsmouth. By the conclusion of the first week, the participants better understood their knowledge about revitalization and the community under discussion.

Week Two: Biblical Foundation

During the second week, I led a lecture on the biblical passage Ezekiel 37:1-14 and other texts that emphasize revitalization through transformational change. This passage vividly illustrates Ezekiel's ability, with God's assistance, to breathe life into dry bones. These passages reinforce revitalization through principles, precepts, and sound exegesis. Through divine empowerment, Ezekiel transforms lifeless bones into a mighty army.

In the first part of our study, I analyzed the text’s sound exegesis and interpretation, emphasizing its transformative potential. I explored additional biblical texts to reinforce the theme of revitalization through transformative change. Following this discussion, we outlined the theological significance of death and life and examined its implications for the church and the community in bringing forth new life. Subsequently, group discussions focused on the dynamics of life within Portsmouth and PGBC.

Lastly, I encouraged each participant to reflect on how Ezekiel's narrative resonates with them, the church, and the community through a journal entry. If Ezekiel, with the help of the Triune God, could revitalize the dry bones of Israel, then God, through the guidance of leaders, can certainly bring life to PGBC and Portsmouth, Ohio. The activities planned for this week aimed to help participants understand the biblical

foundations of revitalization through transformational change and its relevance to Portsmouth, Ohio, and PGBC.

Week Three: Historical Foundation

The third week seminar focused on the Azusa Street Revival and other historical events as they formed the historical foundation of this project. This type of change is not confined to biblical history; it is also possible outside of the Bible. William Seymour played a pivotal role in the Azusa Street Revival, a powerful demonstration of the Holy Spirit. This event sparked a significant evangelistic effort that spread worldwide, originating from a foundation of prayer. During Historical Foundation #One, we discussed the events leading up to the Azusa Street Revival and its transition from Bonnie Brae to Azusa Street. Participants explored how this revival connects to PGBC. In Historical Foundation #Two, participants examined the historical impacts of the Azusa Street Revival and its relation to ministry.

There were five historical impacts of the Azusa Street Revival that relate to this ministry context. First, the Azusa Street Revival emphasized the importance of prayer, demonstrating that God moves through prayer. The second impact is racial unity, as the revival involved people of all ethnicities and showed that individuals from different backgrounds can collaborate and achieve great things. The revival's impact on women in ministry is notable, as it embraced the gifts and talents of women in all areas. The fourth theme is the inclusion of the economically disadvantaged, illustrating how the revival reached those experiencing poverty and suffering, and how they also impacted one another spiritually and evangelistically.

Lastly, the Azusa Street Revival resulted in the creation of several new churches and movements, illustrating how revitalization through transformation can produce meaningful change.[5] After the lectures, the group discussed the key aspects of the Azusa Street Revival that connect PGBC and Portsmouth. Subsequently, the participants journaled their thoughts. In summary, week #three examined how a historical instance of revitalization through transformational change relates to Portsmouth, Ohio, and PGBC.

Week Four: Theological Foundation

Week four's seminar examined the theological roots of revitalization through transformational change and its connection to PGBC. The first theological foundation focused on the ecclesiological construct, analyzing how the church can redefine itself to reach a broader audience while remaining true to its divine identity. The second theological foundation emphasizes the Holy Spirit's active role in the renewal process. Following the lectures, there was a discussion and journaling session for participants to engage with the topic of the church and the Holy Spirit. By the end of the session, participants grasped how these two theological perspectives on revitalization through transformative change relate to this ministry context.

[5] Maria Kahaleel, "Equipping and Releasing Believers to Minister in the Gifts of the Spirit for Effective Ministry and Evangelism New Life Assembly of God in Pembroke Pines, Florida," (DMin. thesis, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, 2013), 73; Estrelda Y. Alexander, *Black Fire: One Hundred Years of African American Pentecostalism* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011), Locational 431-433, 444-478.

Week Five: Interdisciplinary Foundation

During Seminar Week #Five, we explored transformational leadership theory. We defined the theory and outlined its four critical characteristics in Session #One. When I established the link between revitalization and transformational leadership, the participants discovered how these leaders inspire and energize others. In Session #Two, we presented examples of transformational leaders in various contexts, including the Bible, history, and theology. Specifically, we examined Old Testament figures like Ezekiel and Solomon, along with New Testament figures such as Jesus and Paul. Beyond biblical examples, we also analyzed transformational leaders outside of the Bible, including William Seymour, Abraham Lincoln, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It was important to note that transformational leadership is prevalent in theology. Martin Luther and Richard Allen used their theological perspectives to transform their communities and the church. We explored the role of the Holy Spirit as a catalyst for transformation. Throughout the seminar, participants gained valuable insights into the potential for revitalization through transformational change and its benefits for individuals, the church, and the community. To conclude, I led a group discussion to allow participants to reflect on the topics covered. After the discussion, the participants completed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, which assessed how much they embodied transformational leadership. For revitalization through transformational change to happen, there must be transformational leaders.

Week Six: Special Studies and Observation

After thoroughly discussing the biblical text, history, theology, and transformational leadership, we dedicated the sixth week to special studies and observations. My focus was on the impact of women's involvement in ministry on the church, as their leadership is crucial for driving transformational change, especially given their significant presence in the church population. Considering the substantial number of female leaders at PGBC, it is imperative to include this specific question. Furthermore, we explored the connection between revitalization through transformational change and prophetic preaching and praxis. Revitalization is a prophetic action that requires both preaching and praxis, especially in light of the pain and suffering experienced in Portsmouth and at PGBC.

Lastly, I led discussions on the interplay between evangelism, education, and mentorship and their role in revitalization. By improving our approach to evangelism/mission, education, and mentorship across different demographics, we aimed to better serve the Portsmouth community and PGBC. From this discussion, the participants determined which study is most pertinent to the ministry context.

Week Seven: Recap of the Previous Six Weeks

In week seven, we revisited and summarized the previous week's key concepts, insights, and discussions. This recap allowed the participants to reflect on and analyze everything covered thoroughly. By exploring the topics' interconnectedness and implications, participants gained an understanding of driving revitalization through

meaningful and transformative change. As there was no new material, there were no group discussions or journal writing.

Week Eight: Next Steps

In the final week, I undertook essential follow-up actions at the end of the project. During this phase, I collaborated closely with the participants to identify the necessary steps to ensure the continuation of the process. Together, we identified the essential steps to rejuvenate the leaders' ministry. To measure the project's success, a post-test questionnaire was conducted. The session concluded with a facilitator evaluation, including the same questions as the pre-test questionnaire.

Changes to the Project

I am excited to share my journey in implementing a transformative project aimed at reshaping the concept of "community" among leaders, the researcher, church members, and participants to breathe new life into PGBC. This mission is not just important—it is vital for the well-being of everyone involved. The project focuses on revitalization through transformation, and transformation is a form of change. Thus, the project was intended to drive change, and I was meant to change, too.

Thus, as I embarked on this endeavor, I encountered changes that extended the project timeline from six to eight weeks. Initially, I considered resubmitting the Institutional Review Board (IRB) application, but I quickly recognized that doing so would hinder the project's transformational goals. This work fostered positive changes for all stakeholders, as embracing transformative change is essential for the success of

this study. Instead, I communicated openly with participants about the challenges of an eight-week seminar, and I was pleased to find that most expressed their appreciation for my understanding. This approach aligns perfectly with transformational leadership, particularly the principle of individual consideration.

To further enrich the project, I incorporated foundational areas that provided fresh insights, sparking innovative thinking among participants engaged in revitalization efforts. I also updated my measurement tools, choosing the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire instead of interviews. Additionally, I revised the journal and discussion questions. This choice catered not only to the participants' growth needs but also demonstrated my commitment to their individual journeys—another hallmark of transformational leadership.

Excitingly, the project was renamed "Transforming How We Understand 'Community' to Revitalize PGBC." This inspiring title motivates and ignites the passion of church members and participants for community renewal.

On a personal note, this experience has significantly influenced my preaching and teaching across various settings. It is inspiring to see participants learning new concepts, generating fresh ideas, and becoming more engaged in ministry. In summary, the adjustments made during the project's implementation were not just necessary—they were essential for fostering meaningful dialogue on revitalization through transformational change. I was excited about the positive impact the project was having on PGBC.

Contextual Associates, the Congregation, and the Researcher

A team of individuals collaborated to effectively address and resolve the critical question of leadership revitalization. The group was comprised of contextual associates and other members of PGBC who actively participated in discussions about the project and its implementation. Throughout the project study, I ensured that the participants were present and engaged in the dialogue, which guaranteed effectiveness. To maintain the project's integrity, I facilitated weekly discussions that fostered transparent communication. In the process, I observed interactions and made notes about what transpired.

All participants actively assessed the revitalization process, and the contextual associates offered observations about the study leading up to it. This project required significant self-reflection and introspection, so it was crucial to approach the process thoughtfully and with a clear mind. Due to the potential emotional impact of this introspection, I was mindful of the participants' mental and emotional well-being. Prayerful consideration and dialogue were used to achieve clarity, leading to a more effective and successful project outcome.

Professional Associates

To ensure the success of this project, I collaborated with professional colleagues who possessed a wide range of knowledge and skills. These individuals played a crucial role in the project's development and implementation. The professional colleagues formulated insightful questions and comprehensive session plan ideas. Furthermore, their access to valuable resources and expert analyses of the foundational literature that

underpins the project was essential to the overall success of the endeavor. These skilled colleagues could have participated in the sessions but chose not to attend. Nevertheless, they provided additional perspectives and insights that might have been overlooked otherwise.

Doctoral Mentors and IRB

Seeking guidance from my esteemed doctoral mentors on this project proved invaluable as I transitioned into the implementation phase. Their feedback and recommendations provided essential revisions to ensure the project's success. To keep them updated on my progress, I sent regular email updates. These updates allowed them to stay informed about our efforts and offer any additional insights or suggestions that could help us achieve our goals. I adhered to all IRB regulations as I worked towards these objectives. Meeting established deadlines and completing all required consent forms remained a top priority for this project. By following these requirements, I ensured the project proceeded smoothly, with the utmost care and consideration for all parties involved.

Summary of Learning

Week One Learning

Based on the insights gathered from the pre-survey questionnaire, the group identified the essential elements considered crucial for revitalizing both the church and the surrounding community, ranked in the following order:

1. Applying the Sacred Text
2. Being Empowered from Within by the Holy Spirit
3. Being Guided by Leadership That Understands Changing Times
4. Understanding Who We Are as a Church and the Community
5. Learning from History
6. Making Relevant Observations

These findings revealed a significant focus on leadership in guiding change, with participants highlighting the vital roles of the Holy Bible and the Holy Spirit. By prioritizing informed leadership during transformative times, our participants demonstrated a deep understanding of the necessity for leadership grounded in scripture and guided by divine inspiration to rejuvenate the church and its broader community. An interesting observation from the group was their accurate definition of revitalization as a process of infusing life and energy into an entity. They believed that confidence in new ministry activities can flourish by:

1. Matching people with the appropriate ministry roles
2. Responding attentively to congregational needs
3. Fostering open communication

4. Engaging in prayer

5. Showing presence

6. Deepening their understanding of the Word

7. Maintaining a cheerful demeanor.

8. Welcoming new people

Participants expressed a strong belief that PGBC is making strides in its revitalization efforts when all members are actively involved. This progress is defined by:

1. The warm inclusion of new members

2. Leadership that resonates with the congregation

3. Ministry that extends beyond the church's physical boundaries

4. Thoughtful consideration of community needs,

5. The prioritization of collaboration

6. The promotion of transparency and teamwork in conjunction with the pastor.

During the discussion period, the participants underscored the vitality of evangelizing with their communities, following divine guidance, volunteering their time, sharing personal stories, building relationships, and contributing to ministry efforts. There is a fervent desire for PGBC to align with the unique skills and experiences each member offers. Through thoughtful journal reflections, the participants explored important themes, such as reaching young people, enhancing our social media presence, embodying the truth of the Lord, fostering transparency within the community, and demonstrating unity as a church family. While one participant felt optimistic about ministry efforts, others recognized areas for growth. By the end of the first workshop,

participants gained a deeper understanding of revitalization and the potential within our community.

Week Two Learning

After the teaching in week two on Ezekiel 37:1-14, our discussion focused on the pressing needs within the ministry, using the lecture especially as a guide for the conversation. The participants emphasized how important it is for everyone to share their unique gifts and talents. Too often, just a few people handle most of the church's ministry work. The participants recognized the significance of every member tuning in to God's voice. They continued to express the importance of meeting people where they are and helping them understand how God can bring life into their circumstances. The transformative power of the Word truly can breathe renewal into what appears lifeless. Furthermore, the participants prioritized the need for unity and clarity in God's guidance. According to the participants, we must, both individually and as a church, recognize our environment and acknowledge the challenges represented by "dry bones." By doing so, we can listen attentively and appreciate our context. Just as those bones came together, we too need to unite as a church—restored and empowered to spread hope throughout Portsmouth and PGBC.

The participants generously shared their reflections on sustaining their ministries and personal lives through journaling, providing incredible insights from their experiences. They offered valuable tips on keeping their ministry "alive and kicking." One participant passionately reminded us of the importance of resilience in facing challenges and the willingness to adapt. Maintaining the spirit of ministry is a journey

that takes time and yields results that do not occur overnight. Another participant spoke about the power of prayer, the significance of knowing who we are serving, seeking God's strength, and relying on a supportive Christian community as keys to thriving. Many participants revealed that these principles come to life through the revelations in God's Word, which we access by reading and studying together.

Week Three Learning

In week three, all the participants, including me, discussed the connections between the Azusa Street Revival and the transformative steps necessary for positive change. They wholeheartedly recognized the incredible power of prayer, understanding that many revivals were not fueled by charismatic preaching, but by deeply committed prayer warriors. Our discussion ventured into essential topics, such as racial unity, the role of women in ministry, personal spiritual journeys, and the importance of both spiritual and evangelistic empowerment. This ministry-focused perspective sparked a dynamic and inclusive exchange of ideas, with everyone sharing their invaluable insights and experiences. One participant emphasized the critical nature of listening to God's messages through our leaders and raising awareness of unity and collaboration. To address these potential concerns, it is also necessary to ask the right questions and seek solutions.

Wisdom was celebrated as a cornerstone of impactful ministry. Participant #360 articulated how unity is essential to effectiveness. Creating a welcoming environment for members to express their concerns leads to deeper understanding. Participant #64 shared that prayer is crucial in guiding ministry efforts. The church must seek divine direction,

and our leaders should be attuned to God's vision. This sentiment was echoed by others who emphasized that prayer is the means to receiving such invaluable guidance. History teaches us that effective ministry thrives on collaboration through prayer, worship, and relationship-building.

As we reflected on our multicultural ministry, participants wrote their thoughts in journals, sharing enlightening moments. Participant #360, who has been immersed in various church settings, emphasized that the core of their experience revolves around praying for those in need rather than focusing on differences. Meanwhile, participant #493 highlighted the significance of fellowship in reaching diverse communities. Another participant pointed out the active role of evangelism in multicultural ministry, sharing examples such as door-to-door outreach and distributing flyers. Participant #64 conveyed the message that we must meet individuals where they are, ultimately concluding that everyone wrestles with struggles and healing needs, making kindness and love essential in our multicultural ministry efforts. Together, we created a vibrant tapestry of ideas grounded in prayer and collective effort, driving us forward with hope and a shared commitment to transforming lives.

Week Four Learning

In our fourth workshop, we began with an engaging discussion about the effects of Hurricane Helene and the resulting flooding in Portsmouth and nearby areas. While the impact was less severe in some regions, it still influenced the level of participation from attendees. Nevertheless, we decided to move forward with the workshop. Before officially starting the seminar, we took a moment to express our heartfelt empathy for

those affected by the storm. Our lecture focused on understanding the essence of the church, its relevance today, and the strong biblical foundations that support it. We celebrated the individuality of each church and the unique gifts each member brings to the table. During our discussion, we explored ways PGBC can reclaim its identity and enhance its influence in Portsmouth, Ohio. One insightful participant reminded us that demonstrating our work in the community is essential. It is more important now than ever to share these remarkable initiatives, as people need to see and feel God's presence in the community. Our mission should be to engage authentically with the community and broaden our vision to embrace a larger perspective.

Interestingly, another participant believed that the church's identity and community presence were not in crisis. This sparked an important question: what does that participant perceive to be happening in the community, and how can we address the church's waning influence? This participant acknowledged the Bible's vital role in reaching others but left us pondering how to communicate the Gospel message effectively to younger generations. On the other hand, participant #64 encouraged us to remember our past successes, raising the question of which strategies have proven effective and whether they can continue to resonate amidst shifting demographics. They are eager to use their knowledge and experience to help reestablish the church's identity and meaningful presence in Portsmouth. Participant #103 suggested that connecting with people where they are and reflecting Christ's presence in our interactions could be vital to regaining our identity and impact.

We then engaged in an enriching conversation about the essential role and characteristics of the Holy Spirit. Participants enthusiastically shared ideas on how to

strengthen the church's influence in our community. Participant #459 fondly expressed that the presence of the Holy Spirit offers a profound explanation for our personal experiences, which have prompted increased dialogue about Him. Another participant recognized the significance of the Holy Spirit while emphasizing the foundational role of the Bible, although they could have elaborated on how the Holy Spirit communicates through scripture. Participant #64 noted the importance of the Holy Spirit's presence as a comforter and guide. It became clear that we often overlook the vital importance of the Holy Spirit as the driving force that energizes our endeavors. A lack of motivation can sometimes indicate that the Holy Spirit may not be as active in us as He could be. To conclude our workshop, I encouraged the participants to reflect on strategies for overcoming challenges through a thoughtful journaling exercise. Participants were invited to express how to reclaim their lives after trials and tribulations. Participant #459 eloquently highlighted the power of a strong prayer life. Having a robust prayer life involves trusting God and embracing His will. Echoing this sentiment, Participant #103 advocated for open communication with God through prayer, seeking wisdom from trusted mentors like teachers and pastors. Participant #64 added another dimension to our conversation, noting that navigating life without God's guidance often leads us astray. We need His wisdom and strength to persevere during challenging times; this viewpoint resonated with the group. For our community and church to realign and move forward positively, we must trust in and communicate with God regardless of our circumstances.

Week Five Learning

This week has been truly inspiring as we integrated the Bible, history, ecclesiology, and pneumatology through transformational leadership theory. I shared the pivotal role of transformational leadership in driving revitalization through impactful change. Together, we explored the powerful ripple effect of a transformed life, capable of influencing and uplifting not only the church but also the entire community. I divided my presentation into three enlightening sections: (1) the essence of transformational leadership, (2) the attributes that define transformational leadership, and (3) compelling examples of transformational leaders in the Bible and throughout history, as well as the connection of transformational leadership theory to ecclesiology and pneumatology. The post-lecture discussion was genuinely engaging, with participants passionately grappling with how they can embody transformational leadership to create a meaningful impact on the church and community. To further gauge our understanding, the participants completed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire to assess whether they exhibited transformational leadership characteristics. Our session concluded with heartfelt prayer, after which we were given an additional fifteen minutes for personal reflection and meditation. The data from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire begins at the bottom of this page and continues on a few of the following pages. The scoring range is as follows: a. High (9-12), b. Moderate (5-8), c. Low (0-4).

Figure 1. The Participants' Level of Idealized Influence

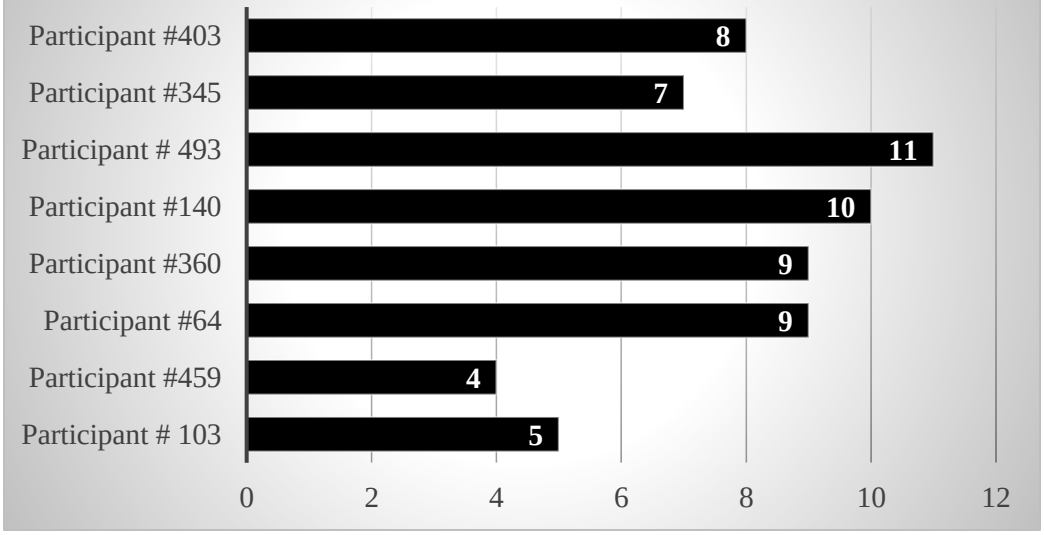


Figure 2. The Participants' Level of Inspirational Motivation

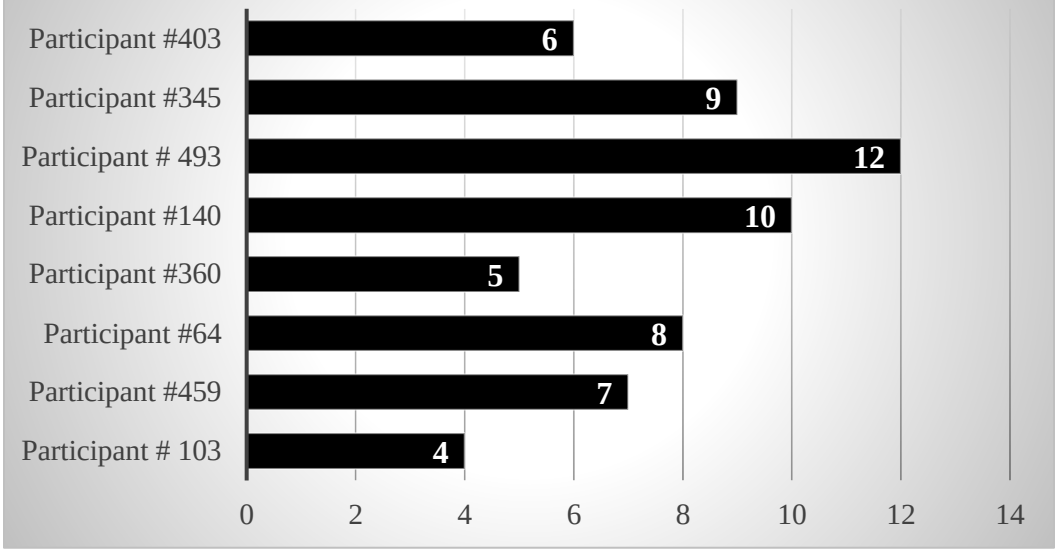


Figure 3. The Participants' Level of Intellectual Stimulation

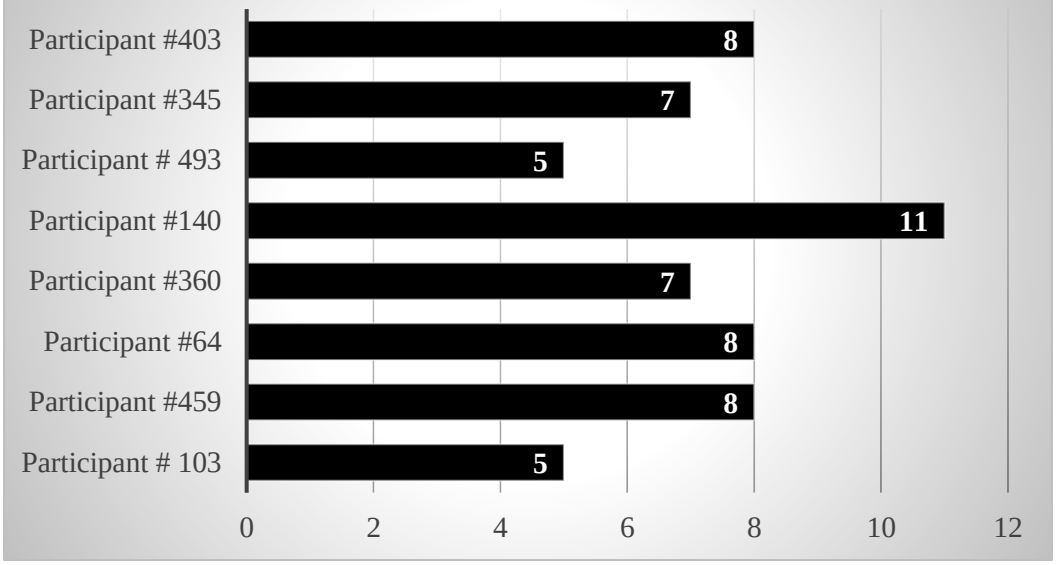


Figure 4. The Participants' Level of Individualized Consideration

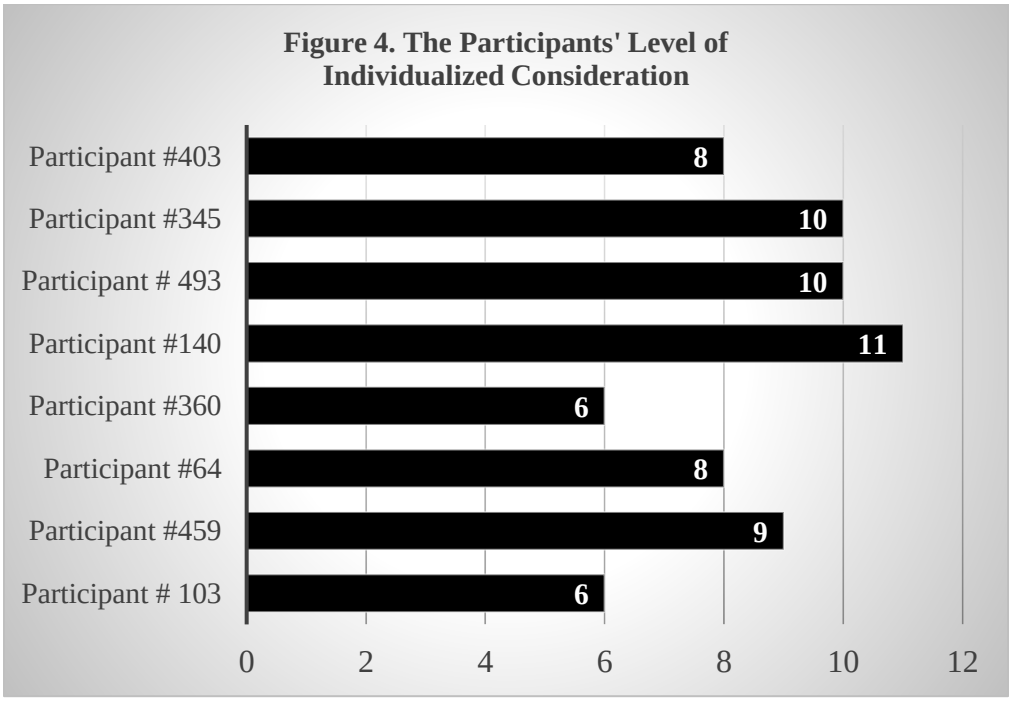


Figure 5. The Participants' Level of Contingent Reward

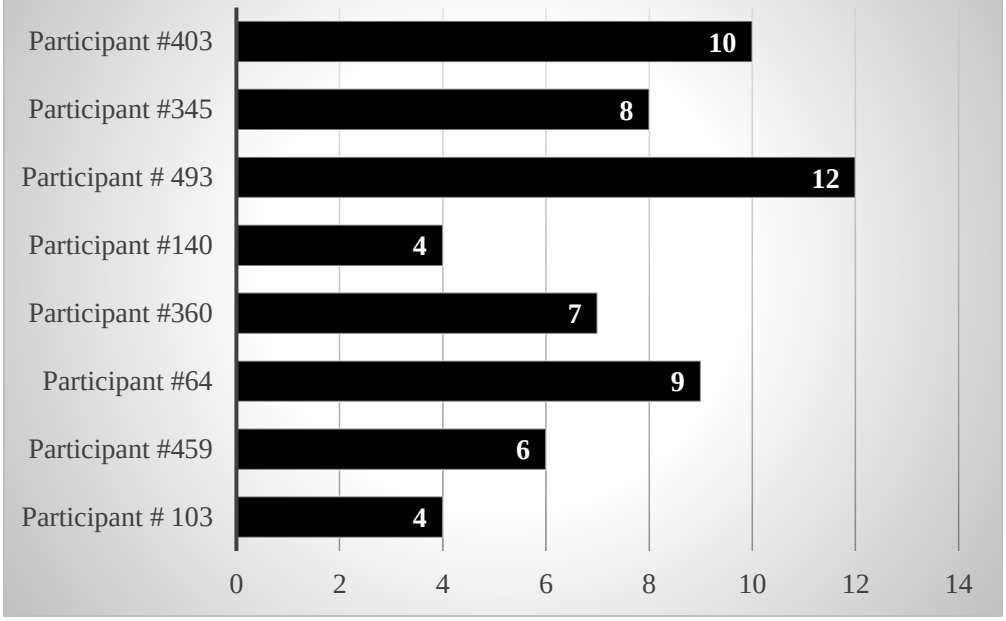


Figure 6. The Participants' Level of Management-By-Exception

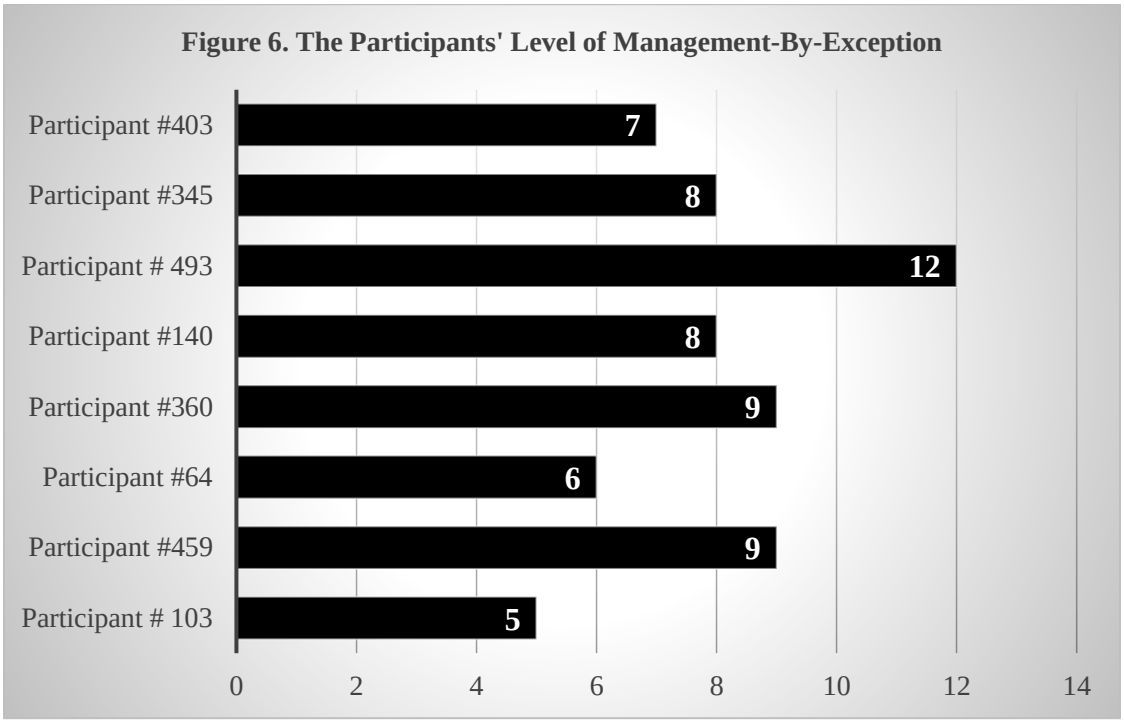


Figure 7. The Participants' Level of Laissez-Faire

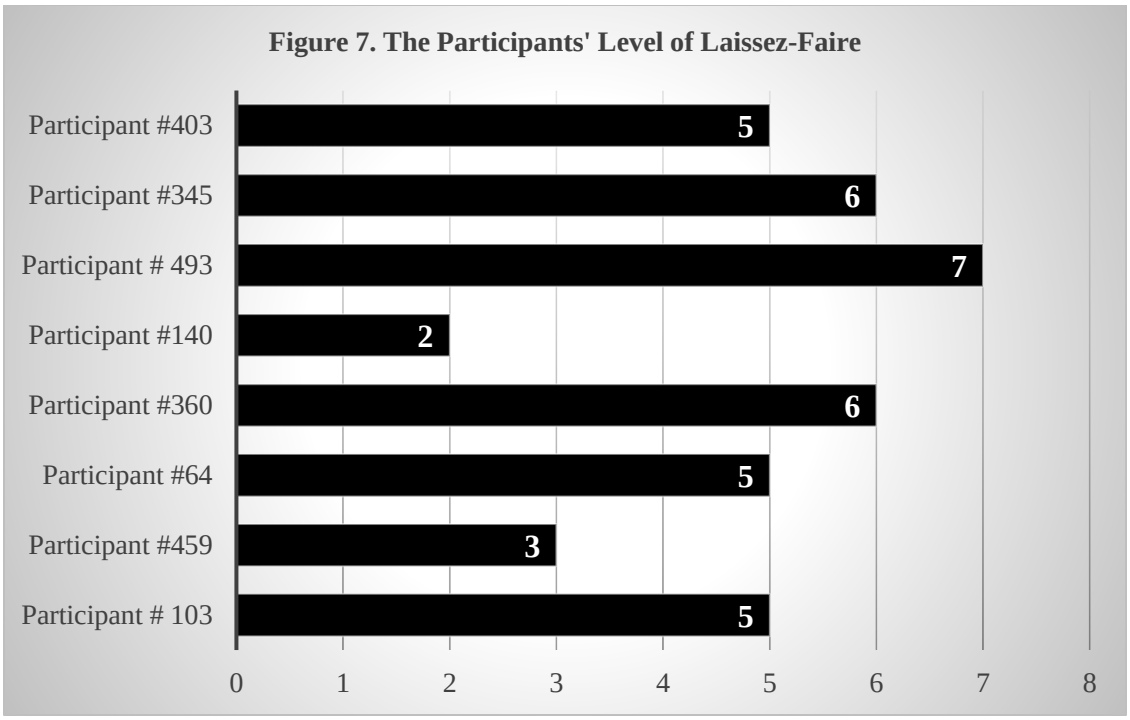


Figure 8. The Leadership Style of Participant # 103

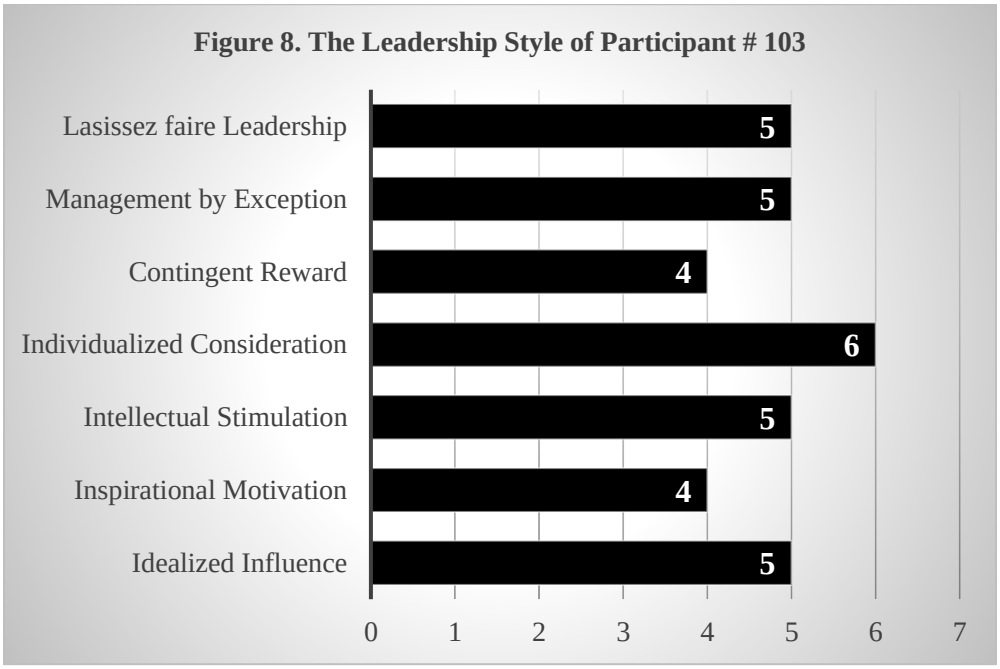


Figure 9. The Leadership Style of Participant # 459

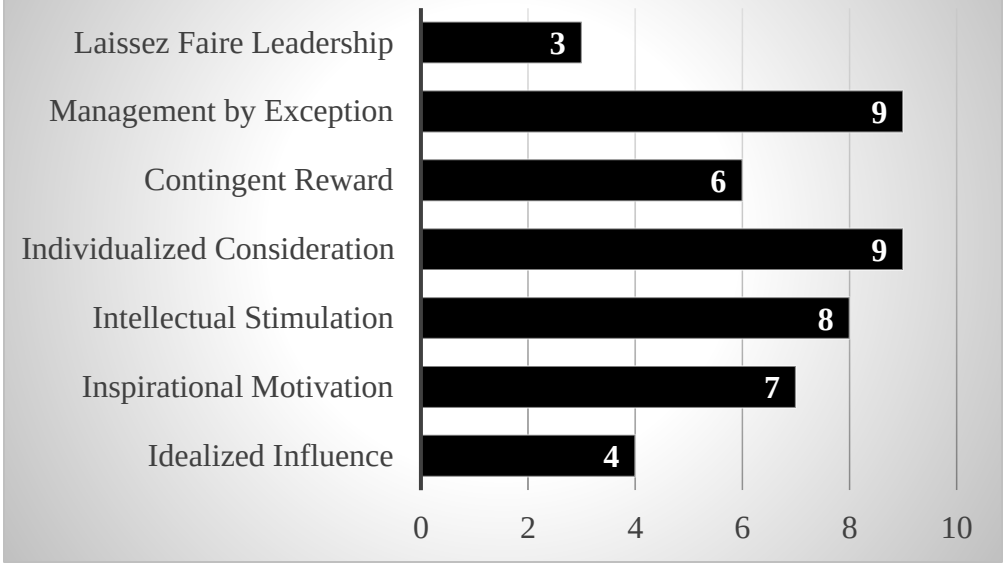


Figure 10. The Leadership Style of Participant # 64

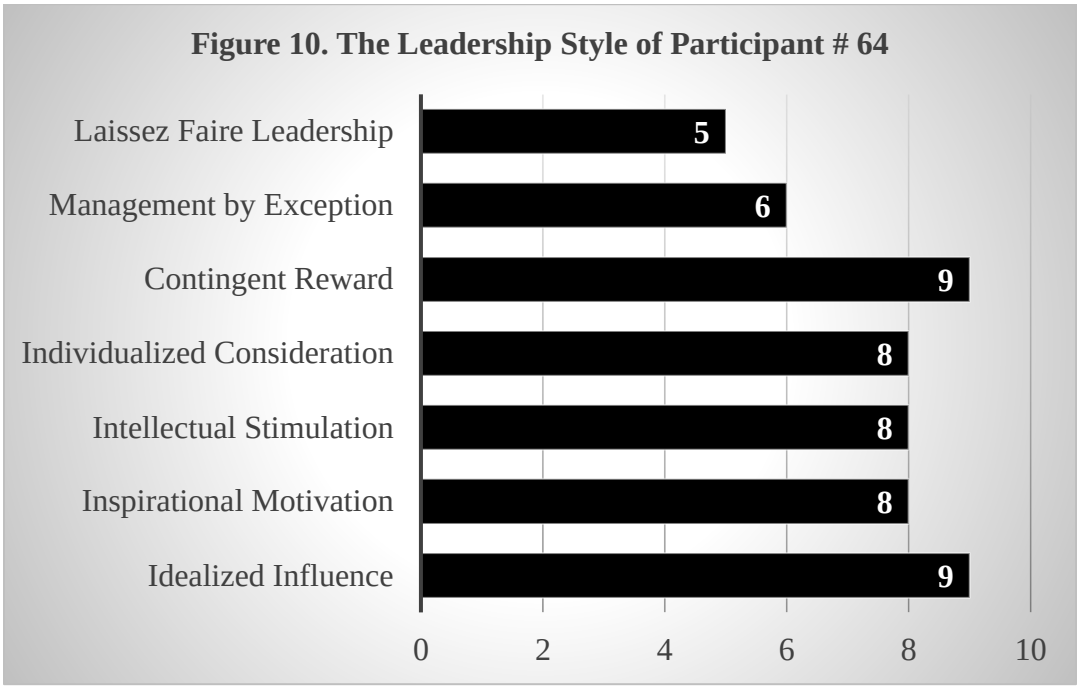


Figure 11. The Leadership Style of Participant #360

Figure 12. The Leadership Style of Participant #140

Figure 13. The Leadership Style of Participant # 493

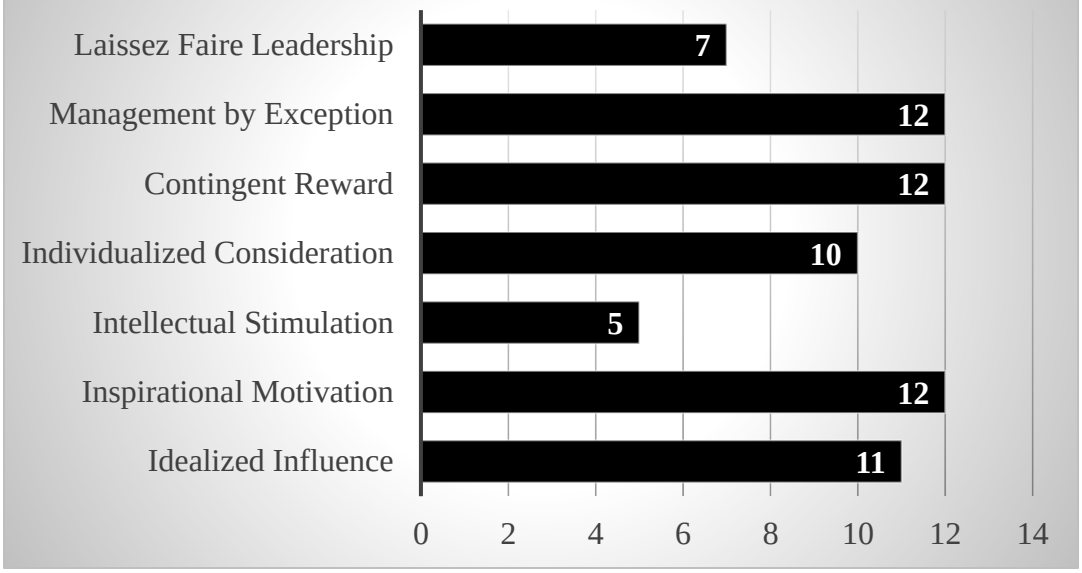
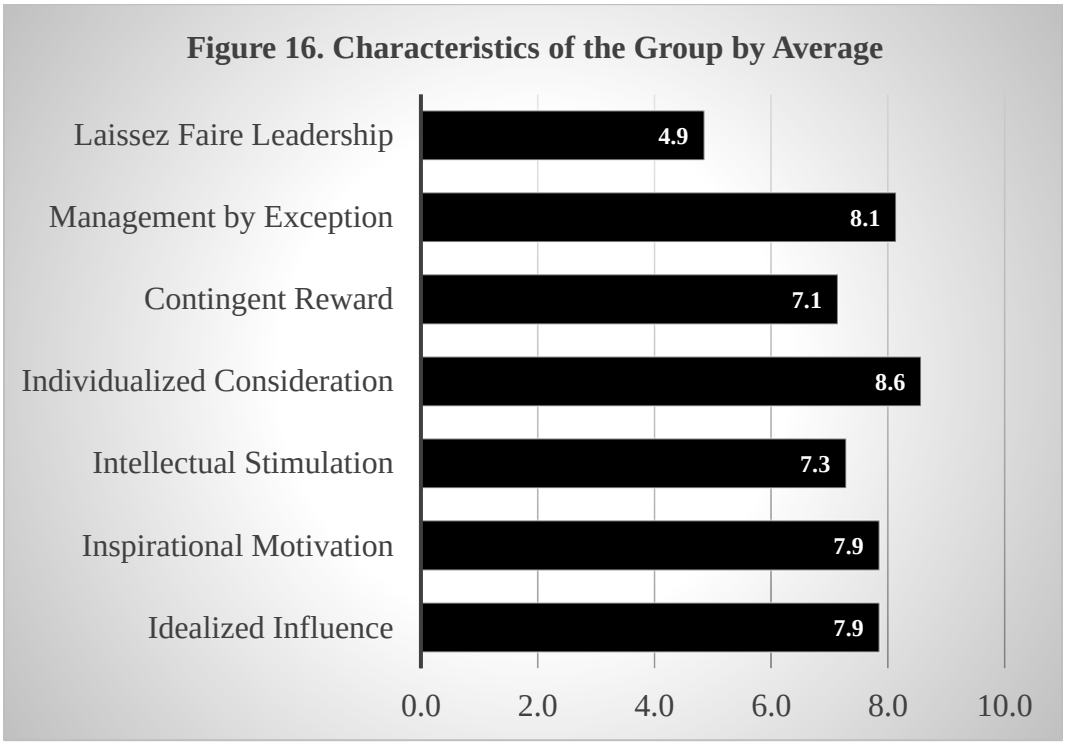


Figure 14. The Leadership Style of Participant #345

Figure 15. The Leadership Style of Participant #403

Figure 16. Characteristics of the Group by Average



Week Six Learning

This week in the workshop, we transitioned from exploring our four foundational areas to outlining engaging topics for special studies! Building on last week's enriching discussions and my own research, I revisited our themes for special studies and considered the best ways to present them. Initially, I wanted to explore the role of women in ministry, a topic that the participants greatly valued during week two. The church fully affirms the importance of women in ministry and its necessity for the future. However, we collectively decided that to revitalize PGBC, our focus should shift to essential areas like evangelism, education, mentorship, and fellowship. This journey has been enlightening for the participants and transformative for me.

During our lecture, I clearly defined each aspect and illustrated how they intertwine with revitalization through transformational change. Evangelism serves as the heartbeat of ministry, while Christian education is essential for equipping believers in their evangelistic efforts. Fellowship fosters relationships and unity, and mentorship ensures we cultivate future leaders to continue the meaningful work of the church. I was thrilled to see the participants actively engaging in discussions about which topics would resonate best with PGBC and the Portsmouth community. We concluded the session with a reflective journaling activity, encouraging participants to think creatively, followed by a heartfelt prayer time. This collaborative spirit energized our gathering.

Week Seven and Eight Learning

In week seven, we had a wonderful opportunity to revisit the topics we explored in the previous weeks. Witnessing the participants actively engaging in our discussions

was truly inspiring! After recapping the key ideas from earlier sessions and journals, we set out to develop an exciting action plan to adapt to our changing demographics. I encouraged the participants to share their creative and practical ideas, and they narrowed them down to three impactful activities.

The first initiative we organized was a vibrant breakfast event aimed at strengthening our membership, building relationships, and highlighting the significance of service. The enthusiasm was contagious! Next, we developed the "Bring an Unsaved Person to Church" initiative to warmly invite newcomers to experience Christ. Lastly, we chose a concert as our third activity, which undoubtedly fostered an atmosphere of joy and connection between both the saved and unsaved communities.

In week eight, we discussed the theme of transformational leadership. The participants' surveys of transformational leadership revealed the significance of individual consideration when meeting people's needs and tackling the exciting challenge of being creative in reaching our evolving demographics. Following this enlightening conversation, we enthusiastically and collaboratively wrapped up our action plan.

Focused on fostering fellowship, the breakfast was organized by an individual who coordinated with a committee. They planned to personally deliver specialized invitations to each member, which would add a lovely touch. This breakfast would be a potluck gathering, tentatively scheduled for December 12, 2024, at 11:00 AM. Once we ironed out the breakfast details, the group enthusiastically discussed the "Bring an Unsaved Person to Church" initiative. The participants named this event "Friend's Day," which took place on November 17, 2024. It aimed to create a welcoming atmosphere for

new attendees, and the “friends” would receive a special welcome bag to show their appreciation.

Rounding off our action plan is an exciting concert, tentatively scheduled for April 6, 2025, at 4:00 PM, as we finalize the “Community Calendar.” This concert will showcase incredible soloists and choirs, with a dedicated coordinator reaching out to various talented singing groups. The participants are considering the theme “PraiseFest” and are eager to spread the word about the event through web flyers, social media, and printed materials. After finalizing the action plan, the participants completed the post-test survey, and I concluded our eight-week journey with a heartfelt prayer.

Figure 17. Participants by Week

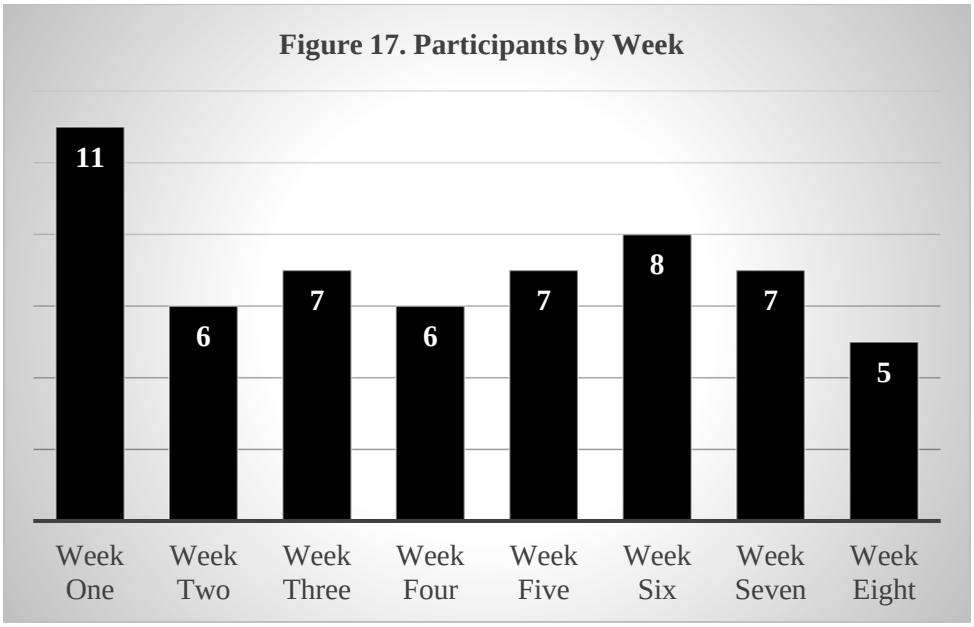


Table 1. Pre-Test and Post Observations by Order of Importance

Pre-Test (Order of Importance)	(By Rankings)
The Bible	1
Holy Spirit	2
Leadership Addressing Change	3
Church Identity	4
History	5
Relevant Observations	6
Post-Test (Order of Importance)	(By Rankings)
The Bible	1
Holy Spirit	2
Church Identity	3
History	4
Relevant Observations	5
Leadership Addressing Change	6

Based on this data, the participant considered the Holy Bible and the Holy Spirit to be of the utmost importance in revitalizing PGBC and Portsmouth, Ohio. What changed during the seminar is that church identity moved into the third spot, and leadership addressing change moved into the last position. This might suggest that the participants still focus on themselves internally instead of placing all of the importance on one person.

Conclusion

Introduction

This journey began with the following hypothesis: “If the leaders are taught revitalization through transformational change, then the leaders will be equipped to identify the changing demographics of the church congregation and the surrounding community.” The research then illustrates the connection between the context of PGBC and my ministerial focus. God has strategically placed individuals to help bring life to PGBC and Portsmouth, Ohio. After revealing the synergy between calling and context, the research shifted to Ezekiel 37:1-14. In this passage, God used the prophet to bring life to dry bones, which became the mighty army of Israel.

Next, this work examines this hypothesis through the lens of the Azusa Street Revival. Focusing on William Seymour and his team of believers who trusted that God would bring life to their situation, a prayer meeting began, which ultimately became a revival that transformed the world. The foundational section shifts from history to theology, wrestling with the importance of ecclesiology and particularly emphasizing the identity of the church. Additionally, this section discusses the significance and validity of pneumatology, the study of the Holy Spirit.

The final foundational area underlines the transformational leadership theory. By redefining their communities, transformational leaders create a committed atmosphere to society’s continuous improvement. This academic work then outlined the project implementation and analysis, which attempted to prove the hypothesis presented at the beginning of the research. From the project analysis, the hypothesis is most likely true

that when leaders are trained to identify the changing demographic, they are more likely to have the necessary tools to teach others revitalization through transformational change.

Pre-test and Post-test Questionnaire

The analysis of the pre-test and post-test questionnaires proved that the church needs to reflect on its identity to discover ways to meet changing demographics. The participants understood what it takes to bring about revitalization. However, more teaching is needed to train the participants and possibly the church. They do not completely understand how to communicate their faith experiences to strangers.

Discussion Questions

The eight-week seminar's discussion was engaging and informative. Participants discovered their current lack of involvement in ministry, which underscored the ministry's necessity for establishing opportunities for all members to participate actively. Furthermore, it was emphasized that participants should exhibit initiative in their engagement rather than awaiting encouragement from others.

During the second week, it was revealed that participants must gain awareness of the ministry needs within the community and understand how to connect them to the biblical text. Addressing these community needs has the potential to foster revitalization within the ministry. Historical accounts illustrate that revitalization efforts can yield positive outcomes. However, several participants expressed unfamiliarity with the Azusa Street Revival. Throughout the discussions, the participants discovered that prayer was a primary spiritual discipline that initiated revivals. Once we entered the theological

seminar, the participants learned that they need to explore who they are as the church because if the church loses its identity, it loses its authority. This authority comes through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is important for the participants and the church to be guided by the Holy Spirit.

In the transformational leadership seminar, the participants noticed their difficulties with various aspects of transformational leadership, particularly in thinking creatively to address the needs of their context. One reason creative thinking may be challenging is that many participants are older, and their perspectives are often shaped by past experiences. The final discussion focused on special studies and which ones they find significant. Research indicates that no specific area stands out as the most critical. What does this imply? There needs to be a focus on the overall ministry.

Journal Entries

From the journal articles, the church needs to reflect on the overall sentiments regarding the ministry in Portsmouth, Ohio. These journal entries would help the church recognize the changing demographics. The participants explored the broader ministry landscape within the city, with a primary focus on PGBC. This inward emphasis hinders overall growth and the mission to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The participants contemplated what it means to be alive and engaged. Given their experiences, the participants suggested that staying connected to the Word through the Holy Spirit helps one remain on track. Overall, the church excels at understanding their experiences but struggles to share them with others. The third week of journaling focused on the participants' experiences in multicultural ministry, though most had limited exposure in

that context. This gap in understanding presents a teaching opportunity. In the following week, the participants reflected on their experiences and discovered that trials and tribulations can aid them in connecting with people where they are. In the final journal entry, the participants emphasized their struggle with innovative thinking.

Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire

This questionnaire assessed whether the participants are transformational leaders. Overall, the participants demonstrated a moderate level of transformational leadership. They require additional work and training in this area. Among the characteristics of transformational leadership, the participants, on average, exhibit individualized consideration the most, indicating that they pay close attention to the needs of those they lead in terms of achievement and growth. The weakest area identified is intellectual stimulation, suggesting that the participants find it challenging to motivate others to think innovatively. Of the other characteristics, the participants show the greatest strength in management by exception, meaning they tend not to change approaches unless something is broken, which ties back to their lack of innovation.

Next Steps

This project beautifully illustrates how revitalization not only lifts individuals but also strengthens our entire community. The goal of revitalization is to pave the way for a brighter future for everyone involved. Much like the inspiring story of the prophet Ezekiel, who was invigorated by the Triune God to restore life to the dry bones of Israel, we, too, can draw inspiration to invigorate our efforts. According to the biblical text, God

can revitalize His people through transformational change.[6] The data clearly shows that we have enthusiastic members who are eager to drive transformative change. Now is the moment to empower them, and their enthusiasm is palpable. A powerful example of this transformational energy was seen in the Azusa Street Revival, which sparked new churches and movements. By embracing transformational change, we cultivate meaningful connections within our community. To make this happen, inspirational leaders are crucial; they must embody the spirit of revitalization and wield their influence to enhance ministry. Revitalization is more than just an idea; it is a prophetic act that brings life through preaching and practical efforts—especially as we face the unique challenges confronting Portsmouth and PGBC.

In the discussion, we tackled vital topics, such as engaging young people, enhancing our social media presence, embodying God's truth through our actions, promoting transparency and unity, and fostering our church relationships. Embracing diverse perspectives allowed the group to maintain an optimistic outlook on our ministry while also identifying areas ready for growth and improvement. Throughout this journey, every participant gained a renewed appreciation for the importance of revitalization and the remarkable potential already present in the community. The weekly gatherings evolved into a vibrant mosaic of creativity and spirit, rooted in prayer and collaboration, as participants expressed their commitment to the transformative nature of faith.

Discussions focused on the real needs of our church and community. In essence, trust in God and open communication are crucial in fostering positive change amidst

[6] Daniel Winski Wright, "Leading Revitalization Through Prayer at Jefferson Baptist Church in Jefferson, Georgia" (EdD. thesis, the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, 2023) 4, 19-24.

challenges. The energy during these eight weeks was invigorating, and I am excited to see where this movement leads us next. As we move forward, it is essential to implement these changes with our inspired individuals, ready to roll up their sleeves and make a difference. Together, we can achieve remarkable things!

Expectations when the Project is Over

This project, the initial phase of our revitalization efforts, exceeded expectations upon its conclusion. The primary goal was to help participants understand the importance of maximizing a community's potential by recognizing each individual's unique talents. The participants came from diverse backgrounds, educational levels, age ranges, and personal circumstances, and each made valuable contributions. As a result of our collective efforts, we can recognize the changing demographics of the church congregation (95% African American with mean age above 55 years) and surrounding community (predominantly Caucasian with median age of 37). This success demonstrates that, with commitment and collaboration, we can transform our diverse community into a cherished entity.

One of our key goals was to facilitate the restoration of lives, and we firmly believe in the power of divine intervention. We are inspired by the belief that God can revitalize individuals through leadership inspired by the Holy Spirit and empowered by His Word. This belief gives us hope and inspires us to continue our efforts, knowing that if this restoration is possible for leaders, it is indeed attainable for the broader congregation, with leadership serving as the catalyst. It was crucial for us to emphasize the importance of individual commitment in this project. The Azusa Street Revival

established that revitalization through transformational change commences with individuals—regardless of group size—who are attentive to the Lord's voice through prayer and actively seeking His presence. This emphasis on individual commitment empowers each of us and makes us all responsible for the success of our community's revitalization.

Another key focus point was understanding identity and the significance of the Holy Spirit. The church's identity is deeply rooted in its historical context and ability to endure over time, a quality sustained by the Holy Spirit's transformative presence. Beyond theoretical discourse, it was crucial to underscore the importance of actively implementing revitalization strategies through transformational change. While some leadership abilities may be inherent, transformational leaders are cultivated and developed through rigorous practice over time. Participants comprehended that leaders who drive revitalization can significantly enhance the effectiveness of evangelism, education, mentorship, and fellowship. Moreover, the participants engaged in brainstorming sessions that presented a comprehensive list of innovative activities aimed at fostering positive change within the church and the community.

Defining Community

Defining the concept of community is crucial to the project hypothesis and the overall scope of this initiative. The community around Pleasant Green Baptist Church, known as the Northend, is a unique entity. It is situated in the North Central Section of Portsmouth, Ohio, spanning a five-mile radius. For the purpose of this research project, we focused on “community” within a two-mile radius that includes Pleasant Green

Baptist Church. This Northend community is characterized by a multicultural element, with a younger population (under 37 years of age), predominantly white, female, low income with an opioid drug epidemic. This demographic profile is markedly different from that of Pleasant Green Baptist Church, which is predominantly black, female, over 55 years of age, and a mix of middle- and upper-class blue collar and white collar established people, as well as community activists. The Northend community, with its six African American churches, is no longer as entirely African American and no longer responds to community activists for an entirely African American audience. To fully understand the dynamics of this community, we must delve into each preceding chapter.

Initially, when approached from the perspective of the ministry focus chapter, the community is perceived as a dynamic entity that continuously evolves, influenced by ecumenical dimensions. As stated earlier, the context surrounding Pleasant Green Baptist Church and its environment in Portsmouth is undergoing significant demographic changes. To genuinely comprehend the essence of community, one must broaden one's horizon of comfortability. This community must incorporate individuals who differ in appearance and life experiences. The divine creation of humanity in the community suggests that although individuals may vary in nationality or personal histories, they share a fundamental commonality rooted in the understanding that God is sovereign, and humans are inherently intertwined.

The biblical foundation chapter shows that effective community leadership is crucial in the Northend community because effective leaders guide and influence the community at large. Pleasant Green Baptist Church must strive to foster vitality and energy among its constituents, reinforcing the necessity of cohesion. It is essential that

Pleasant Green Baptist Church members develop relationships within the community in order to reach the people. A fragmented community, like the dry bones depicted in Ezekiel 37, ceases to exist. Restoration can only occur through divine intervention and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Despite the changing environment surrounding Pleasant Green Baptist Church, this community must remain unified and expand its understanding of what community entails.

In examining the historical foundation, one may draw valuable lessons from the Azusa Street Revival regarding the nature of the community. This event underscores the significance of diversity and illustrates the transformative potential inherent within a community. As demonstrated by the principles of the Azusa Street Revival, a small group of people can be the catalyst for transformation, striving to enhance the lives of all individuals, particularly those who are marginalized. The Northend community must be characterized by renewal and vitality, driving growth in the face of demographic shifts. To be the church as God intends for Pleasant Green Baptist Church, the church must be a place of renewal and transformation.

Theologically speaking, this community should be a collective where a diverse and transformed group of individuals understand their identity and the essential elements contributing to their vibrancy. It is rooted in the Civil Rights Movement and liberation. Pleasant Green Baptist Church, alongside much of Portsmouth, Ohio, can leverage its skills and humility to effect positive change. This aspect forms a critical part of their identity, yet it necessitates redefinition to align with evolving demographics. Furthermore, the guidance of the Holy Spirit is vital within this community. The Holy Spirit is the driving force behind transformation.

In the interdisciplinary chapter on transformational leadership, this community requires leaders who have undergone transformation themselves and can inspire others to facilitate community development. In the practical phases of this project, participants identified that revitalization through transformational change encompasses fostering fellowship, engaging in evangelism and mentorship, and revitalizing both the church and its surrounding community.

In conclusion, the Northend community, the community in which Pleasant Green Baptist Church is located, has transitioned from exclusively African American to a multicultural community, of people from all ages, experiences, and ethnic groups. So, in order to revitalize through transformational change, Pleasant Green Baptist Church must adjust how it does ministry to this melting pot of culture, because community goes beyond the comfort of the people we know. It celebrates diversity and understands the commonality and the unique identity of itself**.**

Framework for Helping Others to Overcome Fear

In this context, fear is a major obstacle, especially the fear of the unknown. On one hand, the church membership is older, and they are stuck in their beliefs and traditions, and unwilling to yield to the change that transformational leadership brings. On the other hand, if they have tools to address their fear, it may help them overcome root cause of their fears.

As I defined the idea of community in the previous section, the answer comes from within the research. The biblical research and ministry focus inform us that understanding is a significant part of the battle, especially when entering different

ministry contexts. It became very fearful, and it was filled with trauma when it ended in a valley of dry bones; so, to combat and eventually overcome, one must understand the fear that people have. Community leaders must acknowledge the people with fear, identify it, and give people room to articulate it so it is okay to be afraid. This means acknowledging fear and validating feelings. Throughout the ministry focus, I validated my feelings by saying that I am broken just like everyone else, and I validated their feelings by indicating their need to get beyond the maize, the struggle, and the pain. This requires me modelling to the people that it is okay to have those feelings.

From the Azusa Street Revival, we see the importance of awareness. William Seymour came to Los Angeles and was kicked out of a church that he was supposed to pastor. He had a choice to stay in Los Angeles or leave. The immediate reaction of fear was to leave but he stayed. This principle is important because leaders must express how fear can affect the body and mind and reduce its power. William Seymour's life expresses transparency of one's ability to overcome obstacles. In each situation, fear was present and could have stopped himself from moving forward. In other words, the stories of others who have overcome fear can provide a person with hope and inspiration to overcome fear.

From the research on the church, where the body of Christ must continue to rethink who they are, it is important for leaders, including myself, to help explore and identify when these thoughts and emotions of fear rise up and help the person who is being afraid by encouraging them and helping them through positive thoughts. The church struggles to reidentify itself but must see something beautiful that comes out of

exploration. Doing so means not running from fear but confronting it even when it does not feel good.

When we wrestle with and acknowledge the Holy Spirit's importance and how it changes the hearts of men, we see another component in eliminating fear. Overcoming fear requires behavioral changes. That means pinpointing the source of the fear. For Pleasant Green Baptist Church, the source of fear is the unknown. Why is it the unknown? The members would probably say, "It will take me out of what I am used to, things that I have done well, and now I have to do something different." At times, confronting fear may require medicine prescribed by a doctor, but it often demands actions that challenge their fear. What one discovers is that what they fear is not as overwhelming as initially thought.

According to the transformational leadership theory, fear can be overcome by developing strong support. Remember, this theory's core mission is to make it better for everyone. That requires meeting people where they are or individualized consideration. Instead of dismissing fear, surround that person with love and support and let that person know we are there for him or her. That support system may even require professional help. Also, at the core of transformational leadership is empowerment, which can be a means for people to overcome fear by setting goals that help to overcome fear and advocating for self-care that improves the individual's holistic health.

When we got into the project, other aspects of helping overcome fear came to mind. Throughout the project implementation stage, I intentionally provided spiritual and emotional support. Our belief in God helps to overcome fears. God does not give us fear but power, love, and a sound mind, so it is important to lean on God to overcome that

fear because he will comfort us in that moment. What this means is using the scriptures as a way of affirmation. Plus, in order to address any possible concerns about the lectures, the participants were able to journal, and journaling is a good aid in overcoming fear. It allows a person to express emotions and eventually lower their fear.

After using all of these techniques, the framework will require constant evaluation and recalibration. For example, we are doing the end-of-project analysis, evaluating what we did well and what we did wrong. The same goes for fear. We must see what helps people overcome their fear.

Use of the Contextual Associates and Participants Going Forward

Going forward after the project, I will use the contextual associates and seminar participants to help the project leap off the pages of this document. As I have learned through the Master of Divinity program and this research, context determines meaning. In other words, the research should inform me on how I use the contextual associates and the seminar participants. To begin with, it is important to note things that have occurred with the contextual associates and seminar participants as a result of the research. First, I began using small groups with ministry initiatives that help to reduce anxiety of leading or being the main voice. Secondly, I have assigned them as a person of contact for the ministry initiative to build relationships between the church and community. Also, I have increased participation of individual church members when developing relationships with others church denominations outside of the Northend community to increase respect for diversity, which I modelled in front of the people.

How does this participation of the contextual associates and the seminar participants connect to the ministry focus and foundation chapters? What does it mean going forward throughout the life of the church as I lead the church? First, I will train them to truly celebrate their journey and help them to discover and/or rediscover their sense of calling and ministry. Every believer has a calling in their life; thus, the participants have a ministry focus, which connects their calling to the context. Second, the biblical foundation taught us that leaders must bring life. So, I have to teach the teacher and bring life to them. Although Pleasant Green Baptist Church and Portsmouth, Ohio, have had a period of lost jobs, lost hope, and increased drugs use, life can come back in this city, this community, and this church. However, I understand that this process will not occur overnight. It will take time to move the church and community from where it is now to where it can be, filled with excitement, hope, dreams, joy, and peace.

Next, I take lessons from the Azusa Street Revival and William Seymour by involving the comprehensive ministry by continuing to create small groups, where the participants, the contextual associates, and soon-to-be others would be point-people in these small groups. These focus groups will focus on prayer, transformation, progress, and growth. In this process, I will role play real life issues to help address their fear and improve their response to life’s concerns. Also, it will include both in-person and virtual ministry activities that set the atmosphere for a transformative experience alongside a strong social media presence.

The theological foundation taught the participants, contextual associates, and me to understand the church's identity. So, this group will assist in identifying ways to help

Pleasant Green Baptist Church be a place of transformation, energy, freshness, and excitement. So, yes, the dry bones can live again. In interdisciplinary research, it is important to have transformational leaders and facilitate the growth of this group from transactional to transformational leaders. Yes, it is a process, and some of them will fight this progression, but once they see the beauty in how it helps themselves, the group, the community, and the church at large, they will buy into it. Again, this work will be hard, and it will not occur overnight. It will take several years to come to fruition.

What Went Wrong in the Project

Two things went wrong in this project. The first thing that went wrong occurred the first night when one participant voiced fear of not being educated enough to have relevant input. I attempted to support him by showing that everyone has a special gift and their opinion was important, but the participant left and never came back. The sharing of thoughts was not meant to be like writing a school paper. That participant could have used words or sentences and even not answered any questions. Each participant was empowered to not have to respond to any question by continuous reminders, but that one participant still did not come back. I was not prepared for him on the first night but when that participant left, I knew that the participant would not come back. I should have expected some fear from some of the participants of articulating their thoughts on paper. Maybe using such programs as Speakright, where a person could speak about their thoughts, would have assisted the participants.

I learned throughout my ministry journey and in the various ministry contexts that there would be unexpected challenges. Surprisingly, God assigned a person from

Jackson, Tennessee, to pastor in Portsmouth, Ohio, by way of Dallas, Texas. Ezekiel was in a valley of dry bones via holy transportation. There is no way he could imagine being in that location. In accessing the few traditional churches that I have been a member of, transformational change among church members presents significant challenges. Can the church shift when it is necessary? I am not any different. When I saw the participant struggle, the transformational effect of the Holy Spirit informed me that I should shift in the first session how to implement the first or make it easy for that participant. Remember, transformational leadership is about making it better for the individual and the group.

In contrast, the second thing that went wrong was not putting all my weekly lectures on PowerPoint. When I do PowerPoint, it makes it easy for me to follow and to express what God has for me to say freely. This error speaks to better planning in the project process and not overdoing things. Yes, sometimes pastors and preachers make mistakes, too. So, going forward, I will take on things that fit the ministry focus and what God has intended for me to do. However, I will correct this error by going back and putting this entire lecture series on PowerPoint and expand the eight-week lecture series into a twelve-, eighteen-, or twenty-four-week lecture series because I believe that revitalization through transformation is the secret sauce needed in today's churches.

Final Word

In summary, revitalization through transformation change is essential for the Pleasant Green Church's growth and development as a church. However, as we throughout the events of the last several years, revitalization through transformational

change will also be vital in other churches keeping things fresh and impactful in an ever-changing society. For a long time, the theory of leadership in churches has been servant leadership, but transformational leaders are the ones who serve and aid the people in the church and the community being transformed, ultimately giving life to ministry. It is important to note that transformation takes time. Again, I ask, “Can these bones live?” With passion, I say yes, and the vehicle for the bones becoming alive is revitalization through transformational change.

APPENDIX A

PROJECT CALENDAR

August 5th – September 6th - Participant Recruitment and Confirmation

September 9th First Meeting – Seminar Introduction
10 minutes of prayer and reflection
10 minutes to take Pre-surveys.
25-minute lesson on Seminar Introduction #1
5-minute break
25- minutes lesson on Seminar Introduction #2
20 minutes Small Group Discussion Questions
20-minute for journaling
5 minutes of closing prayer
Total minutes: 120

September 16th Second Meeting – Biblical Foundation
10 minutes of prayer and reflection
25-minute lesson on Biblical Foundation, Part#1
10-minute break
25-minute on Biblical Foundation, Part#2
20 minutes Small Group Discussion Questions
20-minute for journaling
10 minutes closing prayer
Total minutes: 120

September 23rd Third Meeting – Historical Foundation
10 minutes of prayer and reflection
25-minute lesson on Historical Foundation, Part #1
10-minute break
25-minute Historical Foundation, Part #2
20 minutes Small Group Discussion Questions
20-minute for journaling
10 minutes closing prayer
Total minutes: 120

September 30th Fourth Meeting – Theological Foundation
10 minutes of prayer and reflection
25-minute lesson on Ecclesiology
10-minute break
25-minute on Pneumatology
20 minutes Small Group Discussion Questions
20-minute for journaling
10 minutes closing prayer
Total minutes: 120

October 7th Fifth Meeting – Interdisciplinary Foundation
10 minutes of prayer and reflection
25-minute lesson on Interdisciplinary Foundation, Part #1
10-minute break
25-minute on Interdisciplinary Foundation, Part #2
20 minutes Small Group Discussion
20 minutes—participants taking Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire to see how much of a transformation leadership the participant is.
10 minutes closing prayer
Total minutes: 120.

October 14th Sixth Meeting – Special Studies and Observations
10 minutes of prayer and reflection
25-minute lesson on Special Studies/Observation, Part #1
10-minute break
25-minute on Special Studies/Observation, Part #1
20 minutes Small Group Discussion Questions
20-minute for journaling
10 minutes closing prayer
Total minutes: 120

October 21st Seven Meeting – Recap of the Six Weeks
10 minutes of prayer and reflection
35-minute lesson on Recap of the Six Weeks, Part #1
10-minute break
35-minute on Recap of the Six Weeks, Part #2
30 minutes Prayer and Meditation Exercise
Total minutes: 120

October 28th Eighth Meeting – Next Steps
10 minutes of prayer and reflection
25 minutes to discuss the next steps for the participants as leaders
10-minute break
25 minutes to discuss the next steps
10 minutes participants to take post-survey.
30 minutes Closing Prayer and Meditation Exercise
Total minutes: 120

APPENDIX B

PROJECT MEASUREMENT TOOLS

Project Measurement Tools

September 9th Week One: Seminar Introduction
Pre-Project Questionnaire

1. I understand revitalization as_____.
2. I can help instill greater confidence in new ministry activities by_____.
3. Rank the items below in the order of importance (1-being most important and 6-being the least important) of what will contribute most significantly to bringing life to Portsmouth, Ohio and the Pleasant Green Baptist Church: Applying the Sacred Text___Learning from History___ Understanding who we as the Church/ who we as a Community___Being Empowered from Within___ Being Guided by Leadership who understands changing times___ Making Relevant Observations___
4. I believe Pleasant Green Baptist Church will be progressing towards revitalization and bringing life to the community when_____

Group Discussion Questions

1. I can help the most with ministry activities when I_____.
2. Did it reach new people and/or create new energy in the church? Yes / No Why or why not? _____

Journaling

Detail what your overall feeling about ministry in Portsmouth, Ohio. In your opinion and considering today's climate (such as demographic changes/ socio-economic dynamics, etc.), describe what is the most effective and least effective strategies. Outline the mutual value and benefits for you as an individual believer and the church at-large for effective ministry.

September 16th Week Two: Biblical Foundation
Group Discussion Question

1. According to Ezekiel 37:1-14 and other biblical texts, I believe the most important ministry need is_____
2. How can you meet that need? _____

Journaling

Describe what you have done to keep your ministry and life "alive and kicking" Detail those strategies that have been the most effective and least effective. Explain any advice you will give to people to continue to keep life in it.

September 23rd Week Three: Historical Foundation
Group Discussion Questions

1. According to history discussed this week, I believe that ministry is most effective when we_____.
2. Have you done ministry with this type of insight? Yes / No Why or why not? _____.

Journaling

Describe your experience with the multicultural ministry in Portsmouth, Ohio. If experience, detail what are the most effective and the least effective strategies in multicultural ministry. If you do not have experience, detail what you do know about multicultural ministry. In either case, explain how you would reach someone who is different than you are here.

September 30th Week Four: Theological Foundation

Group Discussion Questions

1. For today's discussion, I think I can help the church the most regain its identity and increase relevance/impact in Portsmouth, Ohio by_____
2. What will be the first step for you to help accomplish this identity and relevance? _____
3. From the second half of the conversation, I learned that the resurgence of Holy Spirit discussion is because of_____

Journaling

Detail what you have done to get back on track when trials and tribulations have occurred. In your experience, outline what were the most effective and least effective strategies to get back on track. Explain any advice you can give people who have lost their way.

October 7th Week Five: Interdisciplinary Foundation

Group Discussion Questions

1. According to what was discussed on transformational leadership, how can you help the church most impact Portsmouth, Ohio? _____
2. How can you articulate this fact in a non-anxious or non-threatening way? _____

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass/Avolio): (Instead of Journal)

This questionnaire provides a description of your leadership style. That leadership style will show up in your home, at your job, and wherever you are. Judge how frequently each statement fits you.

Key: 0 Not at all
1 Once in a while
2 Sometimes
3 Fairly often
4 Frequently, if not always

1. I tell others what to do if they want to be rewarded for their work. ____
2. I provide recognition/rewards when others reach their goals. ____
3. I call attention to what others can get for what they accomplish. ____
4. I help others develop themselves. ____

5. I let others know how I think they are doing. ____
6. I give personal attention to others who seem rejected. ____
7. I make others feel good to be around me. ____
8. Others have complete faith in me. ____
9. Others are proud to be associated with me. ____
10. I express with a few simple words what we could and should do. ____
11. I provide appealing images about what we can do. ____
12. I help others find meaning in their work. ____
13. I enable others to think about old problems in new ways. ____
14. I provide others with new ways of looking at puzzling things. ____
15. I get others to rethink ideas that they had never questioned before. ____
16. I am content to let others continue working in the same way as always. ____
17. Whatever others want to do is O.K. with me. ____
18. I ask no more of others than what is absolutely essential. ____
19. I am satisfied when others meet agreed-upon standards. ____
20. As long as things are working, I do not try to change anything. ____
21. I tell others the standards they have to know to carry out their work. ____

October 14th Week Six: Special Studies/Observations
Group Discussion Questions

1. From today's seminar, the special study that captured my attention was_____because_____.
2. Have you been involved in any ministry activities which were connected to today's seminar? Yes / No Why or why not?
   _____

Journaling

Describe an instance in which you were called on to help with a job that went outside of normal. Detail what was the most effective and least effective about the assignment. If you have no experience, explain what you would have done in that situation. In either case, outline how it would bring energy or excitement to the organization.

October 21st Week Seven: Recap of Previous Weeks
No Group Discussion Questions as this week is a recap of previous weeks.
No Journaling *as this week is a recap of previous weeks.*

October 28th Week Eight: Next Steps
Post-Project Questionnaire

1. I understand revitalization as_____.
2. I can help instill greater confidence in new ministry activities by_____.
3. Rank the items below in the order of importance (1-being most important and 5-being the least important) of what will contribute most significantly to bringing life to Portsmouth, Ohio and the Pleasant Green Baptist Church: Applying the Sacred Text___Learning from History___ Understanding who we as the Church/ who we as a Community___Being Empowered from Within___ Being Guided by

Leadership who understands changing times___ Making Relevant Observations___

4. I believe Pleasant Green Baptist Church will be progressing towards revitalization and bringing life to the community when_____

APPENDIX C

BRAINSTORMING OF THE PARTICIPANTS' THREE IDEAS

Brainstorming of the Participants' Three Ideas

BREAKFAST

I. Type: Fellowship or Prayer

II. Committee or Person

III. Media – How are we going to inform the congregation and community

IV. Cost – Church or Offering

V. Date

VI. Other

BRING AN UNSAVED PERSON

I. Date

II. More Inviting Names

III. Anything to make the day a memorable experience

CONCERT

I. Type: Choirs, Soloist, Mix

II. Date

III. Person to initiate contact

IV. Theme

V. Media and Communication

VI. Refreshments – yes or no

APPENDIX D

PARTICIPANTS' IDEAS/SUGGESTED MEETINGS

Participants' Ideas/Suggested Meeting

IDEAS FROM THE GROUP DISCUSSIONS

- Sharing Testimony - Evangelism/ flyers
- Women's Fellowship Ministry with Combined Churches meeting at different locations.
- Sharing information about what the Church is doing
- Having Fellowship time as a Church Body
- Having a Dry Bones expression day
- Prayer and supplication outside of the church walls
- Pew Rally
- Breakfast for men, women or all inclusive
- Bring an unsaved person to church
- Ideas that do not require lots of physical effort
- Praise and Singing Concerts
- Mentoring Program
- Revival of the Fellowship Committee
- Small group discussion times
- Increase mentor present in Children's Brunch/ have lessons flow into active participation in Sunday service
- Members need to use their gifts- organization, hosting workshops, leading group sessions, hosting relevant, real discussions.

The Equipping of the Saints Meeting

(Prompted by the Participants' Journal Entries and Discussion Dialogue)

Listed Below are the Agenda Discussion Items:

1. Meetings to prepare to engage others.
2. Practice sharing your story
3. Practice listening and empathy
4. Learn to not always feel the need to talk, just listen
5. Learning to be non- judgmental and using non-judgmental language
6. Reviving what has worked, and accepting new ideas
7. Staying committed
8. Come together in prayer
9. Using your gifts/ recognizing them in a neutral setting

APPENDIX E

CORRELATIONS

Correlations

Correlation Between Participants	
Correlation between Participant # 103 and 459	0.262
Correlation between Participant # 103 and 64	-0.228
Correlation between Participant # 103 and 360	0.158
Correlation between Participant # 103 and 140	0.335
Correlation between Participant # 103 and 493	-0.358
Correlation between Participant # 103 and 345	0.154
Correlation between Participant #103 and 403	-0.085
Correlation between Participant # 459 and 64	0.126
Correlation between Participant # 459 and 360	0.000
Correlation between Participant # 459 and 140	0.605
Correlation between Participant # 459 and 493	0.140
Correlation between Participant # 459 and 345	0.709
Correlation between Participant # 64 and 360	0.072
Correlation between Participant # 64 and 140	0.489
Correlation between Participant # 64 and 493	0.299
Correlation between Participant # 64 and 345	0.375
Correlation between Participant #360 and 140	0.091
Correlation between Participant #360 and 493	0.195
Correlation between Participant #360 and 345	-0.324
Correlation between Participant #140 and 493	0.017
Correlation between Participant #140 and 345	0.515
Correlation between Participant #493 and 345	0.526
Correlation between Participant #403 and 459	0.273
Correlation between Participant #403 and 64	0.769
Correlation between Participant #403 and 360	0.337
Correlation between Participant #403 and 140	0.171
Correlation between Participant #403 and 493	0.237
Correlation between Participant #403 and 345	0.262

Correlations Between all participants in comparison with Two Leadership Qualities	
Correlation between Idealized Influence and Inspirational Motivation	0.612
Correlation between Idealized Influence and Intellectual Stimulation	0.165
Correlation between Idealized Influence and Individualized Consideration	0.335
Correlation between Idealized Influence and Contingent Reward	0.491
Correlation between Idealized Influence and Management by exception	0.442
Correlation between Idealized Influence and Lasissez faire Leadership	0.284
Correlation between Inspirational Motivation and Intellectual Stimulation	0.171
Correlation between Inspirational Motivation and Individualized Consideration	0.882
Correlation between Inspiration Motivation and Contingent Reward	0.445
Correlation between Inspirational Motivation and Lasissez Faire Leadership	0.053
Correlation between Inspirational Motivation and Management by exception	0.651
Correlation between Intellectual Stimulation and Individualized Consideration	0.461
Correlation between Intellectual Stimulation and Contingent Reward	-0.355
Correlation between Intellectual Stimulation and Management by Exception	-0.139
Correlation between Intellectual Stimulation and Lasissez Faire Leadership	-0.798
Correlation between Individualized Consideration and Contingent Reward	0.164
Correlation between Individualized Consideration and Management by Exception	0.469
Correlation between Individualized Consideration and Lasissez Faire leadership	-0.305
Correlation between Contingent Reward and Management by exception	0.496
Correlation between Contingent Reward and Lasissez Faire Leadership	0.692
Correlation between Management by Exception and Lasissez Faire Leadership	0.285

The correlation results of both tables will always be between -1 and 1. A negative correlation indicates as one increases as the other decreases. A correlation of 0 means there is no correlation. A positive correlation indicates that the relationship between both increases or decreases at the same time. A perfect positive correlation is 1. A perfect negative correlation is -1. Participants #459 and #345 had the greatest positive correlation (0.709), while Participants #103 and #345 had the highest negative correlation (-0.358). Of the transformational leadership characteristics, the group's inspirational motivation and individualized consideration had the most significant positive correlation (0.882), while the group's intellectual stimulation and lasissez faire leadership had the highest negative correlation (-0.798). Participants #459 and #360 had no correlation.

GLOSSARY

Council of Constantinople. In 381 A.D., the second ecumenical council met and determined that the Holy Spirit has the same divine authority as the Father and Son.

Council of Ephesus. In 431 A.D., the church leaders met and determined the divinity and humanity of Christ.

Council of Nicaea. In the 325 A.D., the first ecumenical assembled and resolved that Christ has the same divine authority as the Father.

divine coercion formula. A literary formula where God forces human being to act.

divine imputing formula. A literary formula that occurs when God imparts His Spirit into human beings.

divine inspiration formula. A literary formula where God inspires human beings to respond.

divine recognition formula. A literary formula where writer, hearer, or reader is able to recognize God's action, usually using the word "know".

ecclesiology. The study of church and how it functions as the body of Christ.

Edict of Milan. A proclamation made in 313 A.D. by Constantine I and Licinius that allowed Christian to practice their faith.

eschatological: The theological prospective that addresses the final events of history, commonly known as end times.

literary formula (biblical). The use of recurring words, phrases, and patterns that illustrates the unique ways God communicate with His people.

foretell. When God inspires prophets to reveal events that will occur in the future. These events are firm and nothing or no one can stop these events occurring.

forthtell. When God inspire to speaking forth about events that might or might not occur. It is contingent on the God's people. *See also foretelling*, forthtell is conditional.

idealized influence. Refers to leaders who act as role models, cultivating trust and respect among their followers. This trait assesses how effectively someone connects with the aspirations and dreams of others, motivating them to achieve their full potential.

illocutionary. When words prompt actions. Words such as commanding, requesting, promising, or suggesting indicate an illocutionary effect.

individualized consideration. When leaders recognize a person's unique needs and support their personal growth. This attribute emphasizes providing tailored personal support and development that nurtures each individual's growth.

inspirational motivation. When leaders energize their teams to achieve shared goals and vision. This concept highlights a leader's ability to communicate a compelling vision that excites and motivates others.

intellectual stimulation. When leaders foster creativity and innovation, enabling followers to explore new ideas and challenge the status quo. This trait demonstrates a leader's ability to inspire innovative thinking and encourage team members to share their creative concepts.

locutionary. When speakers say something significant that has occurred or will occur sometime in the future.

market cannibalization. When new products negatively affect existing ones. In this research, newer churches and other organizations with their own worship experiences negatively affect older historic churches, such as PGBC and Allen Chapel AME Church.

market saturation. When the growth potential for products and services declines. The Northend community [where Pleasant Green Baptist Church is located] has an excessive number of African American churches in a small area, while there's a declining population of African Americans**.**

messenger formula. A literary formula signals a divinely appointed person serves a messenger for the divine.

Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire. A measurement tool that assesses the level of a person's transformational, transactional, and passive leadership qualities. It is a quantitative tool to measure qualitative data.

Northend. The community around Farley Square that is located in the North Central part of Portsmouth. It is where majority of African American migrated to after the Civil War and during time up to the Civil Right Movement in America. Majority of the African American churches are the located there, too.

opioid. A class of drugs that originates from the opium poppy plant. It has been used as treatment for acute and chronic pain. However, when abused or overused, it will cause addiction leading to death in the patient.

parallelistic connection. Lines in the biblical text that creates parallelism in order to clarify and/or reinforce a statement. There are common types of parallelism: (1) Synonymous parallelism refers to line that invokes the same meaning. (2) Antithetical parallelism are parallel lines those present opposing ideas next to each other. (3) Synthetic parallelism are parallel lines that aid in progressing and continuing a current thought process, where that idea becomes complete.

perlocutionary. A part of speech that indicates a completed action. It is brought about by, or as a consequence of, saying something.

pneumatology. The study of the Spirit and how it functions as the wind/or breath throughout history.

Postbellum South. The events that occurred after the Civil War in the Southern United States of America, commonly known as the Reconstruction Era.

revitalization. The process of infusing new life and energy into an organization or community. It involves renewing and refreshing existing structures, practices, and relationships to promote growth and engagement. In this research, revitalization is achieved through the Holy Spirit, unity, evangelism, the collaboration of everyone's giftedness, and the Word of God.

revitalization through transformational change. The process of infusing new life and energy into an organization or community, via a profound and significant shift that fundamentally redefines that entity. Revitalization is the goal, while transformational change is the method to achieve the goal.

synergy. The combination of two or more parts which become intertwined into one effort.

transformational change. A profound and significant shift that fundamentally redefines an organization or community. This type of change involves alterations in culture, values, and operations, and is often driven by visionary leadership along with a clear strategic direction. This project connects transformational change to empowering leaders to recognize and adapt to the evolving demographics of both the church congregation and the surrounding community.

transformational leadership. A leadership style designed to create significant and positive change within individuals and organizations. This approach inspires and motivates people to reach their full potential, thereby enhancing overall effectiveness and promoting the growth of the entire organization.

trauma. The reaction to a high stressful event or series of events.

Two Sword Theory. A debate in first and second centuries that justifies the authority of the priesthood and the authority of the king (royal authority).

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